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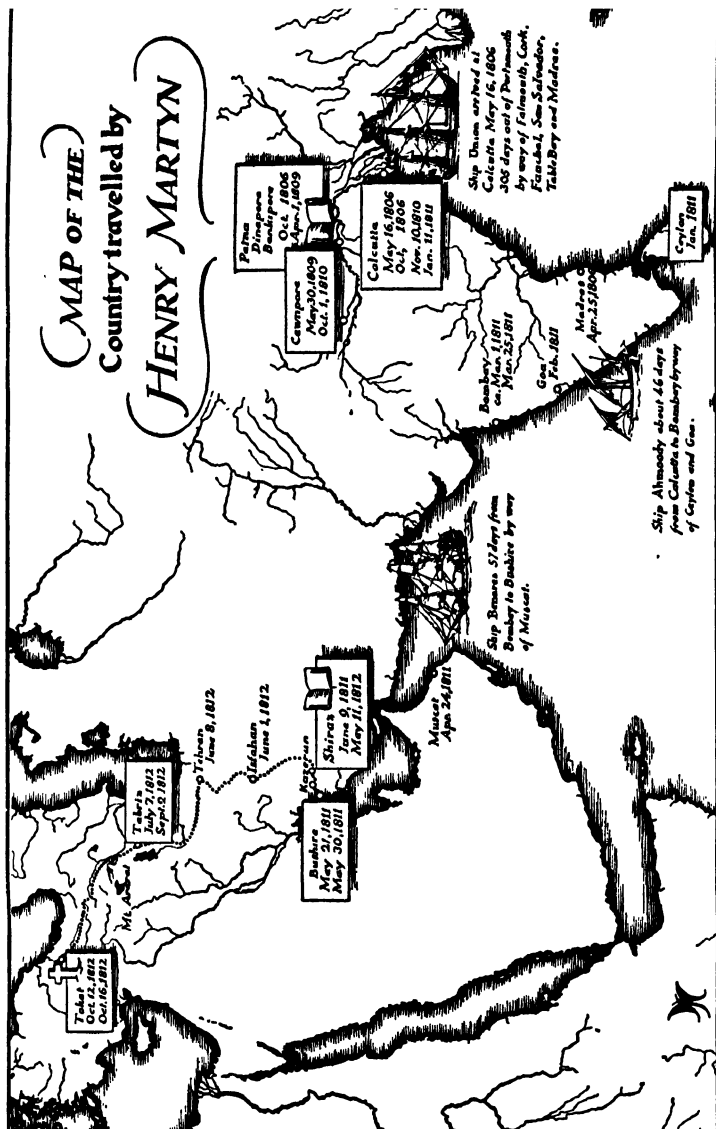
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CHRISTIAN RETREAT AND STUDY CENTRE
Withdrawn
RAJPOUR P.O., DEHRA DUN, U.P.

(MAP OF THE)
Country travelled by
HENRY MARTYN



HENRY MARTYN

CONFESSOR

OF THE FAITH

By

CONSTANCE E. PADWICK

CHRISTIAN RETREAT AND STUDY CENTRE
W. Withdram
RAJPOUR P.O., DEHRA DUN, U.P.

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

THIS biography of a great pioneer will speak to the present generation just as powerfully as it did when it was first published. To enable the book to be produced at a reasonably low price, Miss Padwick kindly consented to shorten slightly the original text. Those who remember the earlier editions will notice the omission of the quotations at the opening of the chapters and the loss of a few of the extracts from the *Journal*. But no essential material has been left out.

The opportunity has been taken of including a brief appreciation of Henry Martyn's life and work written specially for this edition by the Rev G. C. B. Davies, M.A., D.D. This is printed as chapter XV. The Publishers are most grateful to Miss Padwick for permission to include this material and to Dr Davies for his help.

TABLE OF DATES

- 1774 Warren Hastings Governor-General of India
- 1781 *Henry Martyn born at Truro, 18th February*
In this year Herschel discovered Uranus, Lord George Gordon was tried in Westminster Hall, Cowper was 50, Sheridan 30, Fanny Burney 27, Crabbe 27, William Godwin 25, Burns 22, Cobbett 19, Samuel Rogers 18, Wordsworth 11, Scott 10, S. T. Coleridge 9, Jane Austen 7, and Charles Lamb 6
- 1782 *Charles Simeon began work at Trinity Church, Cambridge*
- 1783 American Independence gained
- 1784 Samuel Johnson died
- 1786 Earl Cornwallis Governor-General of India
David Brown landed in Calcutta
- 1787 *Charles Grant and David Brown sent home their 'Memorandum' asking for missionary schoolmasters*
- 1788 *Henry Martyn entered Truro Grammar School*
- 1789 Fall of the Bastille
- 1790 Burke's 'Reflections on the French Revolution'
Charles Grant elected to one of the Chairs of the East India Company
- 1791 Thomas Paine's 'Rights of Man'
John Wesley died
- 1793 Execution of Louis XVI
Sir John Shore Governor-General of India
William Carey reached India in a Danish ship
- 1797 Death of Burke
Henry Martyn entered St John's College, Cambridge, October
- 1798 Battle of the Nile
Earl of Mornington (afterwards Marquess Wellesley)
Governor-General of India
William Carey set up his printing press
- 1800 *David Brown Provost of Fort William College*
- 1801 *Martyn Senior Wrangler and First Smith's Prizeman*
- 1802 *Martyn Fellow of St John's*
- 1803 War declared against Napoleon, May
Martyn ordained at Ely, October

- 1805 Wellesley recalled and Cornwallis appointed to India
 Death of Cornwallis
 Sir George Barlow temporary Governor-General
Martyn sailed for India as Chaplain to the East India Company,
16th July
 Battle of Trafalgar, October
- 1806 *Martyn at the Capture of the Cape of Good Hope, January*
 Death of Pitt, January
Martyn landed in Calcutta, May
Martyn proceeded to Dinapore, October
- 1807 Lord Minto Governor-General of India
Martyn began the Hindustani New Testament
- 1809 *Martyn transferred to Cawnpore, April*
- 1810 The Prince of Wales appointed Regent for George III
Complete Hindustani New Testament finished for press
Martyn left Cawnpore with Persian and Arabic versions of the
New Testament, October
- 1811 *Martyn reached Shiraz in Persia, June*
- 1812 *Martyn set out from Shiraz, May, and died at Tokat, Asia Minor,*
16th October
- 1815 *Martyn's Persian New Testament published in St. Petersburg*
- 1816 *Martyn's Persian New Testament, and the Arabic New Testament*
made by Sabat under his supervision, published in Calcutta

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WHEN Henry Martyn's journals reached England after his death, Charles Simeon, Mrs Thomason and John Sargent sat closeted together for three mornings of six or seven hours each, reading those travelled pages. In that reading they discovered their friend as sometimes, a monk being dead, his brothers find a hair shirt and a scourge of which they had not guessed. For Martyn's friends knew a man who played with children and with little dogs; and a friend who bubbled over with welcoming joy; and a scholar of luminous, beauty-loving mind; and an adventurer who flung himself unquailing into Paynim camps; and a saint whose face sometimes abashed them by its shining. But now they were admitted into the confessional, and they saw laid bare before the heavenly Surgeon all the wounds and festering sores of a turbulent soul. They saw the Surgeon's knife and the quivering wince of the penitent spirit; and they caught the ineffable glance of confidence that passed from time to time between the two. 'In every disease of the soul,' said their friend, 'let me charge myself with the blame and Christ with the cure of it, so shall I be humbled and Christ glorified.'

His journal of self-examination before God is the first and greatest source of our knowledge of Martyn, and this book about him, like the rest, is built chiefly on the study of it.

But there is danger from the use of such a source, that we know our Martyn chiefly as the great penitent. The first friends, to whom the journal came as a surprise, had in mind the good hours when someone showed Martyn a copy of verses or a new Arabic grammar, when he caught the twinkle in Corrie's eye at Sabat's bombast

or the tricks of the Cawnpore school-children, or when the jasmine smelt sweet in the sunset and he drove Mrs Sherwood a devious course in his gig, absorbed in urging upon her the joys of the study of Hebrew. But we who never saw him romp with a child may be misled by meeting him most intimately in hours of penitence. Sargent, his first biographer,¹ 'perhaps his dearest friend' and like himself a saint, knew the man so well and all his friends, and their manner of life, that he could not suppose description necessary. Simeon and Wilberforce might yet be met in the street, letters from Corrie and Thomason might come by any mail. It was not for Sargent, with his supreme delicacy, to draw the portraits of the men who might ride to visit him in his rectory under the Downs. Therefore he painted the spiritual story of his friend with the barest earthly background, as in that brief biography which says that 'Enoch walked with God.'

Yet as the generations pass and the scenes grow dim, we could wish that Sargent had gone down to Cornwall to seek out some old serving-maid of good John Martyn, who could tell us about Laura and Henry and Sally and call to mind the ways of the plain little boy with warts on his fingers. And had he but once described to us how Henry looked up when a friend broke in upon him in his college rooms!

For when the second great biography of Henry Martyn was published in 1892² all who had known the man were gone, and the modest family life in Cornwall had left very little trace on the memory of the neighbourhood. Yet under such disadvantages Dr George Smith, who brought to his book a knowledge of India which Sargent could not claim, put into his task a wealth of research which must make it always the standard reference book on Martyn.

There is nothing new in the present little book. The

¹ *Henry Martyn*, by John Sargent, 1816, and numerous later editions.

² *Henry Martyn, Saint and Scholar*, by George Smith, LL.D.

Church has held most of the records for the greater part of a century: Sargent's *Life*; the great *Journal*;¹ then, as Martyn's generation died, the sidelights from a host of biographies and memoirs of the day; the *Diary of Lydia Grenfell*;² stray letters and magazine articles published from time to time; and at last Dr Smith's great biography in 1892. It is a mass of material, yet with it all there is danger of forgetting a life which is one of the treasures of our spiritual heritage.

For Sargent's book in the religious language of 1816 is almost strange to the children of another century; and Dr Smith's generous copiousness makes his too costly for those of us who count our pence. We shall always turn gratefully to him in the library; he cannot be superseded: but for those who are poor and busy he may, nay probably he *must*, be supplemented, as the Church in each generation looks with fresh eyes on the stores of her spiritual heritage, and catches the glint of fresh colours in the 'variegated' grace of God.

This is not a new book then, but a re-reading of old records, and that not unaided but with the good help of kind people in Cornwall, Cambridge and London too numerous to mention by name, but who have given generous and ready help in regard to anything and everything in which ignorance or carelessness stood in need. They know that they have my gratitude.

Martyn has never been and never will be the hero of the multitude, but each generation holds some who are his spiritual kindred. Across the lapse of years and blurred by the clumsy transmission of biographers, these will still catch with understanding ears the response of his spirit to the call of Christ.

C. E. P.

¹ Edited by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce when Rector of Brighstone, Isle of Wight, 1839.

² Deposited in the Royal Cornish Institute, Truro. Extracts from it were published by a grand-nephew in 1890.

CHAPTER I

CALCUTTA OF THE NABOBS

WORDS have their day, and the word 'nabob' has all but passed out of currency with the passing from English life of the rather pitiable person for whom it stood. But in the last decades of the eighteenth century no better villain could be desired for stage or story than 'a rich Nabob' returned from Bengal. Macaulay, who with his sisters burrowed much among the three-volume novels of the eighteenth century, writing in 1840 said,¹ 'If any of our readers will take the trouble to search in the dusty recesses of circulating libraries for some novel published sixty years ago, the chance is that the villain or sub-villain of the story will prove to be a savage old Nabob, with an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver and a worse heart.' All but an alien on his native soil, this villain added to his other crimes, real or imagined, the crime of differing from his caste. 'For your Nabobs, they are but a kind of outlandish creatures that won't pass current with us.'² What more could comedy or melodrama want?

Yet the nabob-to-be began life much like other small boys of the day, perhaps as one of Squire Roger's younger sons, for whom were neither family acres nor a family living, or maybe as a son of the rectory, where Parson Brown had word one day from an uncle in Leadenhall Street that he had bespoken a writership in the East India Company for 'poor Charlotte's boy.' At sixteen such a boy spent his last morning rabbiting with his brother and the dogs in the churchyard spinney, while

¹ In the *Essay on Clive*.

² Foote, *The Nabob*, acted at Theatre Royal, Haymarket, 1778.

his mother sobbed her heart out over piles of lavender-scented linen. The coach bore away a ruddy English lad with a smattering of the classics and a capacity for honest affection. Forty years later the countryside would know him again as 'the rich Nabob' who called for curricles with the airs of a prince, and showed a pitiable disregard for the cost of living and the laws of fox-hunting. 'Why wherever any of them settles, it raises the price of provisions for thirty miles round,' cries the Mayor in Foote's comedy quoted above; while Lady Oldham explains to the audience the family embarrassment when 'preceded by all the pomp of Asia, Sir Matthew Mite, from the Indies, came thundering amongst us; and, profusely scattering the spoils of ruined provinces, corrupted the virtue and alienated the feelings of all the old friends of the family.'

The process to which the nabob-to-be was submitted from the moment when the East Indiaman left Tilbury on her voyage of seven or more months is little enough pictured by us now.

'Such things as I should not want till my arrival in India were made very large, the Captain saying I should grow very much during the passage,' one of those young 'writers' tells us.¹

We are forgetful of the completeness of exile in those days of long, slow travel, when often enough it took eighteen months to receive the reply to a letter sent home. We hardly realize the gradual wearing down of standards as home memories grew faint and the physical and moral climate did their enervating work. We are apt to see the India of the Company through the stories of men like Clive, Warren Hastings, or Wellesley the imperious. Such as these could not but be chief actors on any stage. They were men of vivid, restless genius, and of political imagination, in whose actions, good or bad, we find something of 'the grand style.' For men of such gifts life

¹ *Travels in India a Hundred Years Ago*, Thomas Twining, 1893.

is not dull, and through their eyes we see romance.

But for an English boy of ordinary gifts life in 'the East Indies' at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was often a tedious affair. 'The waste of spirits in this cursed country is a disease unconquerable, a misery unutterable,' wrote Francis, the archfoe of Warren Hastings. At the age when his brother entered the University our boy was cast upon a Calcutta that had only one carriage road, the dusty 'Course,' and one small theatre, built by subscription and managed by amateur actors, who in their zeal for the drama were apt to undertake parts beyond their power, with the result that 'many went to see a tragedy for the express purpose of enjoying a laugh.'¹ He found indeed a little coterie of English hostesses who received every evening, and beyond a doubt were kind to striplings fresh from home. But the balls of Calcutta provided no blushing English maidens for the boy to adore or play with. Ladies he found there of strange descent and stranger history, and Hicky's *Bengal Gazette*, the first English newspaper in India (published Calcutta, 1780), shows plainly enough how the little, bored society looked for the enlivenment of their hard, hot lives to the relish of betting and unsavoury scandal. 'I don't think the greatest sap at Eton can lead a duller life than this' Lord Cornwallis wrote to his schoolboy son, during his first governor-generalship (1786-1795). And our nabob-to-be soon learnt to echo the sentiments of that industrious and high-minded chief, and to seek distraction in arrack punch and heavy dinners or in stables for which his salary during his first five years as an 'apprentice' was inadequate. But 'a Company's servant,' as a contemporary letter tells us, 'will always find numbers ready to support his extravagance; and it is not uncommon to see writers within a few months after their arrival dashing away on the Course four-in-hand.'²

¹ Mrs Eliza Fay, *Original Letters from India*, p. 279.

² *ibid.* Letter written on 29th August, 1780.

The boy's intercourse with the people of that eastern world, in which his station was a tiny island of European life, would seem to have been of the slightest. Unless he aimed ambitiously at diplomatic tasks—when he studied Persian, the language of eastern court etiquette—he did not take seriously the learning of any oriental language. And when he did take lessons, his teacher was regarded by this young lord of creation as only another servant of a rather superior grade, 'permitted by many of the more liberal students to enter the apartments without taking off his shoes; an omission for which the other servants would be severely punished.'¹ Throughout his long years of exile the Company's English servant may never have experienced the intellectual and spiritual adventure of friendship with an eastern gentleman. When even Sir William Jones, who reached European fame as an orientalist, was yet 'quite unintelligible in Calcutta to any native in any eastern tongue,' it is not surprising that our more ordinary boy never reached converse with the more thoughtful minds of India.

Something of the daily work of the Company's servant may be learned through reading the despatches to the India House of the day. One is forced to the conclusion that, with the great exceptions of high-minded men like Cornwallis, Shore, Wellesley, or Grant, the latter eighteenth century had settled down quite complacently to regard 'the East Indies' as a gold mine. Sir Harry Verelst described the English in Bengal as 'a colony of merchants, governed by laws and influenced by principles merely commercial.'²

We looked no further than the provision of the Company's investment. We sought advantages to our trade, with the ingenuity, I may add the selfishness of merchants. . . . All our servants and dependents were trained and educated in the

¹ D'Oyley, *The European in India*, 1813.

² Letter to Council of Fort William, December, 1769.

same notions; the credit of a good bargain was the utmost scope of their ambition.

Little guessed that old, bourgeois Calcutta of the merchants that she was the stage set for a drama of spiritual adventure. Yet so it was. The saints were coming to town. As when a Christian man first trod the forum of some lustful Roman city, and his spirit, fain of the eternal beauty, felt the unclean life around him to be 'earthly, sensual, devilish'; so when men who had caught the spirit of Christ first touched the sordid life of old Calcutta, there followed struggle and the hardness of moral choice in many lives.

They came in the rather prosaic garb of chaplains of the East India Company: in matters of taste, men of their day, with a power of enjoying if not of producing 'poetical effusions' that leave us cold, and a habit in penitent moments of describing themselves as 'contemptible and wretched worms.' But behind the high neck-cloths and the language of eighteenth-century religious diaries we find the infallible marks of the friends of Jesus.

The precursor and father of the little group arrived when Calcutta was sweltering in the hot weather of 1786, with his wife and a baby born at sea. The Company had sent for 'a clergyman and a married man' to take charge of their new Military Orphan Asylum. The Reverend David Brown who responded to their call was the son of a Yorkshire farm-house, who brought to his Calcutta home, along with a solid classical education, a certain wholesome shrewdness, and the tradition of hearty and generous hospitality. Through twenty-five years of service with only one fortnight of furlough he kept the countryman's fresh colouring. He was no pallid saint. But Calcutta found in that Yorkshireman a spirit that was strange to her.

When he discovered that he was to have the charge of five hundred orphans instead of the forty-five of whom

he had been told, and that the salary was considerably less than had been represented, he accepted the situation with the remark in his diary that 'since a larger field of usefulness was thus opened to my view, I regretted not the diminution of salary.'¹ This Yorkshireman must be reckoned with. He had a disconcerting habit of continual reference to a standard that Calcutta had forgotten. 'I now sit down in a house of my own,' he wrote, 'but my good Master had not where to lay His head. . . . He emptied Himself of all and was literally the poorest of men.'

His habit of reference to another standard led David Brown to do strange things. He found in the city an ugly and at that time glaring building known as 'The Red Church' (now 'The Old Mission Church,' Mission Row), built sixteen years before his coming at the private expense of a Danish missionary, and still the only Church in Bengal.² Calcutta society affirmed that 'the place is only fit for stable-boys and low Portuguese.' Church-going was not modish, and Sunday was the day for races. Moreover it was impossible to go to Church without considerable ceremony. 'If you were a person of fashion yet did not choose to go to Church in your yellow chariot, you would arrive in a neat sedan chair, gleaming with black lacquer. You brought at least seven servants with you,—four chair-bearers, two running footmen with spears and one parasol bearer.'³ A lady told David Brown that 'she had been more than twelve years a resident of Calcutta, and twice married; but it had been out of her power in all that time to go to Church, because she had never had an offer from any beau to escort her there and hand her to a pew.'

¹ *Memorial of the Rev. David Brown*, 1816, p. 298.

² But another was then a-building and was consecrated in June 1787 as St John's Church, now generally known as 'The old Cathedral.'

³ Hyde, *The Parish of Bengal*, p. 190.

The very small group of very mixed parentage that looked to 'the Red Church' for help, was now without a shepherd, and David Brown 'thought of those with whom his divine Master associated' and offered himself as unsalaried chaplain. Calcutta sniffed, but in spite of herself was drawn to the big-hearted man who never took a baptism or a marriage service without a deep human emotion that could not be altogether hidden from the men and women he had come to serve.

Like draws to like, and David Brown had not been many days in Calcutta before he was asked to dine with the 'Senior Merchant' of the Company and found a friend.

Charles Grant, later to be celebrated in the Councils of the East India Company 'for an understanding large enough to embrace, without confusion, the entire range and the intricate combinations of their whole civil and military policy, and for nerves which set fatigue at defiance,'¹ was a Highland Scot whose father had been fighting for the Stuarts at Culloden at the very hour of his birth. He was known in Calcutta as a man long of limb and long of face, his sagacious countenance under massive brows singularly steadfast and immovable, but softening when he glanced at the adorable wife whom he had brought to India as a bride of seventeen, an apt musician and a charming dancer. She made his house a home of rare delight and gave him two baby girls, loved by both parents with the almost desperate affection that surrounds the delicate babes of a household in the tropics. The head of the house for all his home affections followed the ordinary standards of Calcutta society, and the one shadow in the household was cast by the master's gambling debts which piled up far higher than his means of payment.

Then, with dreadful suddenness, the light went out from their home as, within a few days, first one little daughter and then the other was carried off by smallpox,

¹ Sir James Stephen, *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*.

and the twenty-year-old mother was left distraught with grief, springing up now and then in the belief that she was waking from a nightmare and would find her babies in their nursery, only to suffer her first agony over again when she reached the empty room.

To the father's conscience it seemed 'a judgment from heaven' on his selfish and worldly courses. Atonement must be made. In agony of soul he broke through his lifelong reserve and went to Dr Kiernander the old Danish missionary who had built the Red Church.

I found him lying on the couch. My anxious enquiries as to what I could do to be saved appeared to embarrass and confuse him exceedingly; and when I left him the perspiration was running from his face in consequence, as it appeared to me, of his mental distress.¹

Charles Grant came away from the only religious specialist he knew, as miserable as he went. It was his young wife who brought him peace. She noticed, even in her own sorrow, his heavy spiritual anxiety and turned to search such good books as she had, for help for both of them. In the New Testament she found the way of peace and wrote her Charles a letter to tell of her discovery:

Now is not this the sinner whom our blessed Saviour invites to come unto Him with promises of lightening his burden and giving him rest? I think it is.²

He thought so too when her faith led the way, and together they remodelled the life of their household, as those who openly confessed that One was their Master, even Christ. Charles Grant set himself grimly to the task of paying off his gaming debts and cleared them in four years. His work for the Company, in which his calmly sane intellect shone out, became the work of one who cared for India and her peoples with a disinterested love that

¹ George Smith, *Twelve Indian Statesmen*, p. 12.

² Morris, *Life of Charles Grant*, p. 64.

rose above party politics or dividends. 'The views which are entertained by statesmen and others for the welfare of India,' he wrote in a letter of 1784, 'are so disturbed by party as to be sometimes indistinct. Ambition and party, in a word, have marred all that has been intended for the benefit of this country for ten years past. . . . How few . . . rise above the mists of present passions to objects having respect to "Him who is invisible."'

To one trying to guide his personal and public life by standards so different from those current in Calcutta, the coming of David Brown was a great event. In nothing were these two more unique than in their relationships with the people of India. David Brown at once 'dedicated some attention to the languages of the country' and though he made it plain to Calcutta that he was not the man for nautch displays, he proceeded to go 'among the Hindoos in a way not usual with the English. He attended, in their domestic circles, their literary and religious entertainments' and behaved there 'with urbanity and respect.'¹ David Brown, Charles Grant, and two like-minded friends,² persisted in seeing in the people of India men and women with spiritual struggles as interesting to God as their own. With all appearances in Church and State against them, they dared to see a vision of spiritual kinship with India, and to believe that her people might come to share in what was for them the supreme experience of life, the touch of the living Christ on the spirit of a man.

They did not stop at dreaming, but wrote out a proposal which they sent home to clergy and members of Parliament, calling for volunteer missionary schoolmasters to come to Bengal where the Company had not yet raised a finger for the intellectual or moral enlightenment of its eastern subjects. They asked for 'fit men, of

¹ *Memorial of the Rev. David Brown*, p. 71.

² Mr William Chambers, the East India Company's chief linguist, and Mr George Udny, indigo planter.

free minds, disinterested, zealous, and patient of labour, who would accept of an invitation, and aspire to the arduous office of a missionary. . . . His work must be his business, his delight, and reward. . . . Men who are ready to endure hardships and to suffer the loss of all things.'

Knowing their England they sent this appeal to ardent souls, clergy whose zeal had earned them the name of 'Methodist,' and philanthropists like William Wilberforce and Robert Raikes. Raikes in his reply suggested that they had made a false step in asking the 'methodist' clergy to forward their adventure, for, said he, the bishops 'never like to give the reins into the hands of men of warm imaginations.'

Charles Grant and David Brown, for all their spiritual daring, were government officials used to working through official channels; and while they were under no delusions as to the difficulties ahead, it yet never occurred to either of them that their new scheme should be independent of the official sanction of the leaders of Church and State. They were before the day when great private and voluntary societies within the Church undertook her missionary enterprises. The immense growth of these in the nineteenth century was at once a forward and a backward step; forward in that the societies revealed a number of the Church's sons and daughters awakening to a forgotten fundamental of that Church's life, but backward in so far as the primary task of the whole Church was thereby relegated to smaller groups within her. But that day had not yet come, and to Charles Grant and David Brown it seemed a natural course to approach the Archbishop of Canterbury and good King George the Third. They were not over-sanguine as to official countenance for they knew the age-long character of Christian teachers as those who 'turn the world upside down,' and measured the probable opposition. 'The truth, as we presume to think,' they wrote, 'is, that all

objections to the extension of Christianity arise rather from Indisposition to the thing itself than any persuasion of its Impracticability. . . . Some may oppose political Considerations, the danger of disturbing the present Order of things, and of introducing a spirit destructive of that subjection and Subordination, which have made the Natives of Bengal so easy to govern.'

It was a true forecast. George III, grunting a little, told Archbishop Moore that he 'hesitated to countenance such ideas' owing to 'the alarming progress of the French Revolution and the proneness of the period to movements subversive of the established order of things.' Leadenhall Street decided to give no licence to any captain of an East Indiaman for any passenger calling himself a missionary, and the friends now found their hopes of spiritual service for India limited to the possibility of sending out as official chaplains of the Company men with hearts as high as their own and with an equal sense of the spiritual rights of every human soul.

To this end Charles Grant now used his ever-increasing influence in the Councils of Leadenhall Street, with the result that David Brown was joined in the course of years by a group of younger men who dared to share his vision. Among them came Henry Martyn, that youth in years who yet knew the abasement and the rapture of the saint, and who flung at the feet of Christ a scholar's dreams and the heart of a lover.

CHAPTER II

CORNWALL

JOHN MARTYN, citizen of Truro, an amateur mathematician and a pillar of St Mary's Church, had four children, John, Laura, Henry and Sally, three of whom lived the life of Cornwall in the early nineteenth century while the fourth was a traveller in spiritual and physical realms remote from them.

The baby Henry, whose mother died some two years after his birth, opened his eyes in February 1781 upon a discreet and dignified little city which lived its life without much reference to the rest of England. One of the aldermen had never travelled farther than Bodmin, and news trickled in slowly when the journey by stage to Exeter took two days.

It was a trim city, but even while the stage rattled over the cobbled street you could hear if you listened the call of the gulls among the shipping, and catch a tang of the salt sea from the estuary below the bridge. Henry Martyn's childhood was spent in a house of two aspects. Its fairer face looked down a garden to the little river just before it emptied itself into the estuary where the curlews whistle; but the back of the house looked out on the very heart of the city's life. Coinage Hall Street was narrow¹ but just opposite the Martyns' house the buildings gave way to leave a little open square before the pillared cloister of the Coinage Hall. Years afterwards in dreams in India Henry would find himself walking down that street, with the discreet dwellings of the citizens

¹ Coinage Hall Street and Powder Street with the houses between them known as Middle Row were thrown into the present spacious Boscawen Street.

(for it was not yet the shopping quarter of the town), and the cloisters of the ancient Coinage Hall where his father, tall and erect, would take a daily constitutional.

Under those early English arches Wesley preached on more than one of his fifteen visits to Truro, with the people in the square before him. 'Enabled to speak exceeding plain on "Ye are saved through faith."' ¹ The little boy in John Martyn's house might still sometimes see the erect figure of that 'human gamecock,' though he no longer rode up the street on horseback but stepped out of a chaise. Indeed the child Henry was growing up in a world half-moulded by the Wesleys. Their hymns were the songs of his home to which he turned again and again for solace in the remote places of the earth.

There is no record of a beloved nurse or any woman who took the place of the lost mother in the lives of John Martyn's little children. Physically Henry sounds a neglected and untempting child with hands covered with warts, and red eyelids devoid of eyelashes set in a plain little face; but the father who gave his own leisure to mathematical problems saw with delight uncommon promise in his small son.

At the age of seven he entered little Henry at the Truro Grammar School and never ceased to hold before him a career of scholarship. The seven-year-old child trotted across the square and dived down an opposite lane to find himself in the new world of school where it soon became noticeable that little Henry, though no one called him studious, showed a happy faculty for hitting on the right answer. He was 'a good-humoured plain little fellow,' a school-fellow tells us, 'he quailed before no man.' But he was considerably under the average in size and in staying power, and in the hurly-burly of the small boy world he was always pushed to the wall, when he broke into the bitter rages of one who is helpless before his tormentors, yet uncowed.

¹ John Wesley's *Journal*, 27th August, 1776.

Dr Cardew, master of the Grammar School, saw that Henry's knowledge of the classics would be small unless he had protection. He turned the whipper-snapper over to the great, beneficent Kempthorne, a diligent senior boy who was later a clergyman and lord of a manor in the Lizard district. Seated near the big, safe presence little Martyn blossomed out, into no very great diligence at his book it is true—he seemed in those days rather to absorb the classics than to learn them—but into marked sociability, forgetting his helpless rages and becoming one of the friendliest souls in the school.

So the years passed and Henry Martyn, still small for his years, now sat among the 'great boys' at the annual school sermon in St Mary's and on holidays scoured the country with a gun. He belonged to a family of mine agents that never intermarried with the great gentry of the land, but had a sprinkling of cousins and relatives by marriage up and down the Cornish countryside in the ranks of solicitors, clergy or mining accountants. It was a hospitable world, and what with schoolfellows and cousins Henry could ride all over the county and be sure of a welcome at some town-place sheltering among sycamores or in the one street of some country town. There grew in him a great love of the Cornish land so that later even Cambridge seemed 'a dreary scene' when he thought of misty headlands crowned with scilla or sea pink above the slow wash of an opal sea. The holiday rides that meant the most to him were those to St Hilary Vicarage where a little church among its trees stood as a landmark to the sailors in Mount's Bay. Here lived his father's cousin, Malachy Hitchins, and in the old Vicarage garden Martyn's happiest hours were spent.

So the Cornish land bred him and made him for ever her own—small, passionate, affectionate, a boy of parts and of imagination, wholly incapable of passing easily and light-heartedly through sunny shallows, a born plunger into the depths whether of good or of evil.

CHAPTER III

UNDERGRADUATE

HENRY MARTYN left the Grammar School in the summer of 1797. Jane Austen, all unknown in a Hampshire village, was putting the final touches to *Pride and Prejudice*; Charles Lamb spent his brief, idyllic holiday with Coleridge and Sara at Nether Stowey; and Coleridge 'the rapt one of the godlike forehead,' writing a few weeks later to the excellent Mr Cottle, announced that 'Wordsworth and his exquisite sister' were staying with him.

But none of these voices had stirred the Cambridge to which Martyn went when he entered St John's College in October 1797. Rather was she still listening to the rolling echoes of the most sonorous of English voices, hushed only that summer with the death of Burke.

Fanny Burney said of Burke that when he spoke of the French Revolution his face immediately assumed 'the expression of a man who is going to defend himself against murderers.' Just such a look stole into the faces of the authorities at Cambridge when, turning for a moment from the worship of Newton, they heard the strange clash of revolutionary forces in politics or literature. Every year saw its goodly crop of orthodox pamphlets against the writings of Thomas Paine. But Henry Martyn, with four months yet to run before he was seventeen, was still outside the warring world of pamphlets. There was Cambridge, with all her beauty calling to his Cornish soul; his own college, St John's, of whose 'blushing bricks' old Fuller writes, not the least fair. The music at King's College chapel became one of

Martyn's dear delights, and another he was to find in St John's walks and Fellows' Gardens, where yet

*. . . The elm clumps greatly stand
Still guardians of that holy land.*

Undergraduates were bound to wear white stockings, garterless and reaching to short knee-breeches, and men who cared for appearances donned white waistcoats and silk stockings for dinner in hall at about two o'clock. Dinner was followed by disputations in the mathematical school at three o'clock, but these were much deserted for the sake of exercise, and from three till half-past five men rode or walked. The richer and the gayer sort drove curricles, and kept race-horses and hunters, but as yet the rowing man was not, and the river was left to lonely dreamers.

After five-thirty chapel, for missing which at St John's one was ordered an imposition, men made tea in their rooms, or, in the fireless days of summer, repaired to coffee-houses in the town. Reading men then settled in for a long unbroken evening, and social spirits sat down to hazard and burgundy. Few cared to disturb the evening for the supper served in hall at eight forty-five.

Tutors did not in those days give individual lessons, but lectures on the set books for the degree examinations, chiefly 'treatises by Wood and Vince on optics, mechanics, hydrostatics and astronomy.'

Martyn's tutor, Mr Catton, was an astronomer who had been Fourth Wrangler, but in Cambridge opinion should have been Senior. He lived for a little observatory on one of the towers at St John's. When he came down from his observations of occultations and contemplated his new pupil, he found a spare boy under the usual height, who had been taught no mathematics, and whose idea of learning it seemed to be the committing of Euclid to memory. The astronomer called in the help of T. H. Shepherd, a second-year man, who thus tells the tale:

Mr Catton sent for me to his rooms, telling me of Martyn, as a quiet youth, with some knowledge of classics, but utterly unable, as it seemed, to make anything of even the First Proposition of Euclid, and desiring me to have him into my rooms, and see what I could do for him in this matter. Accordingly, we spent some time together, but all my efforts appeared to be in vain; and Martyn, in sheer despair, was about to make his way to the coach office, and take his place the following day back to Truro, his native town. I urged him not to be so precipitate, but to come to me the next day, and have another trial with Euclid. After some time light seemed suddenly to flash upon his mind, with clear comprehension of the hitherto dark problem, and he threw up his cap for joy at his Eureka. The Second Proposition was soon taken, and with perfect success; but in truth his progress was such and so rapid, that he distanced everyone in his year.¹

‘A quiet youth’ Mr Catton had called the slight demure boy of faintly ceremonious manners. But few guessed what a storm centre was the inner life of this freshman not yet seventeen. The Henry Martyn of those early Cambridge days had his being in a spiritual whirlwind. He was swept by great devastating emotions, longings, exaltations, rages, ambitions; raised to an ecstasy by music; cast to despair by a slip in mechanics. ‘A life of woe’ he called it, looking back on those early storms from the comparative security of twenty-three.² In general the outward visible sign of the inward stress was only an ‘exquisite irritability,’ but now and again passion would master him. In such a moment he flung a knife at his friend Cotterill, and those who saw it quivering in the wall knew that the inner Martyn was no ‘quiet youth.’

The safeguards of his storm-swept soul lay in his always warm affections. It is true that there was no mother to be impressed with each new Cambridge phase,

¹ Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 19, note.

² *Journal*, 27th June, 1804.

to be teased, and to be trusted for unfailing love. But at Cambridge there was Kempthorne, and at home there was his father. The big, safe Kempthorne of the Truro Grammar School was still one of the great ones in Martyn's world, having become the Senior Wrangler of 1797. He had won his honours by unflagging diligence, covering more reams of paper, it was said, than any man in the University, as he worked out every problem in a fair hand, perhaps a hundred times, till he had first stripped the argument of each unnecessary step, and then reduced the necessary steps to the most lucid economy of word, line and letter. Such diligence he recommended to Martyn.

The beloved Kempthorne had spoken; and work Martyn did, with a greedy ambition only stimulated by his quick success in the college examinations, then conducted twice a year by the Fellows in hall on the lecture subjects for the term. Martyn was never for half-measures. The boy who knew no mathematics when he came up was soon 'nettled to the quick' when he took second instead of first place in his college examinations. He now set his heart on following Kempthorne's footsteps as the Senior Wrangler of his year, no small ambition in a student whose natural bent was for literature, and above all for language. His love for his father fostered his ambition. The gentle and sympathetic old man, himself a self-trained mathematician, who all along had set before Henry a career of scholarship, was now waiting as eagerly as the boy himself for tidings of each examination.

Only sister Sally, aged sixteen, and a devout Christian girl after the type of piety left in Cornwall by the Wesleys, was full of heavy concern for Henry's passionate soul. Her overtures, nay her exhortations on religion when he went home were 'grating' to the ears of a brother two years older than herself, and he was apt to reply to her 'in the harshest language.' The maiden did extract a promise, one day, that he would read the Bible for him-

self. 'But on being settled at college, Newton engaged all my thoughts.'¹

It seems that Henry did not at the Christmas of 1799 make the tedious journey to Cornwall; but letters from Truro told him that his father was 'in great health and spirits.'

What then was my consternation, when in January I received from my [half] brother an account of my father's death.

The affectionate boy, too young to remember his mother's death, found his first great sorrow staring at him, and he quite alone, in what seemed only a greater isolation because, with the chimes of Trinity and St Clement's, there floated in the sound of eager talk on the staircase, and shouting and sudden spurts of laughter from the court below.

Alone, Martyn found himself shivering before realities he would gladly have forgotten.

I began to consider seriously that invisible world to which he had gone and to which I must one day go. As I had no taste at this time for my usual studies, I took up my Bible [how often had the pious little Sally in Cornwall prayed for that moment!] thinking that the consideration of religion was rather suitable to this solemn time.

But tormented as he was by memories of his own 'consummate selfishness' at home, as set against his father's unfailing 'patience and mildness,' Martyn found no peace of forgetfulness through his effort at Bible reading. He was turning for escape to other books when Kempthorne came in. That steady, comfortable friend, the link between Cambridge and the world of home, now

¹ Twelve years afterwards on a ship in the Indian Ocean Martyn wrote: 'I bless God for Sir I. Newton, who, beginning with the things next to him, and humbly and quietly moving to the things next to them, enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge more than the rest of the sons of men.'

advised Martyn 'to make this time an occasion for serious reflection.'

Once more Kempthorne had spoken, and Martyn obediently turned again to his Bible:

I began with the Acts as being the most amusing, but I found myself insensibly led to enquire more attentively into the doctrines of the apostles.

His interest once awakened, he remarked with approval how the notions he had gathered as a little child from the Cornish Christians of the evangelical revival 'corresponded nearly enough' with what he now read in the Epistles.

It was not Martyn's habit at that time to pray, but prayer seemed a suitable exercise for one urged by Kempthorne to 'serious reflection.' He knelt and 'began to pray from a precomposed form, in which I thanked God in general for having sent Christ into the world.' It was his first stumbling footstep in the way of prayer, wherein his spirit was to know such hard-won and such exquisite delight.

Kempthorne not only advised 'reflection' but lent Martyn one of the religious classics of the day to guide him in it. He chose Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, a book in which the wonderful confidence of the eighteenth century in the power of reason may be seen extending even to her evangelists, who sought to save men by a logical order of convictions, starting in this case with the proposition of the guilt of all created beings before an offended Creator. 'I will labour to fix a deep and awful *Conviction of Guilt* upon his conscience, and to strip him of his vain *Excuses* and his flattering hopes' says Doddridge in the 'general plan of the work.' Henry Martyn, dejected though he was, read and rebelled. 'It appeared to make religion consist too much in humiliation' he said. 'I was not under great terror of future punishment' he tells his sister; and moderns feel a

sneaking gladness that he would not be terrified into the Kingdom of Heaven.

But the vision of a Living Person was slowly stealing into Martyn's heart. 'I am brought to a sense of things gradually' he wrote. 'Soon I began to attend more diligently to the words of our Saviour in the New Testament, and to devour them with delight.' Then when the same voice made 'offers of mercy and forgiveness' Martyn's heart responded and he found himself, he knew not how, praying 'with eagerness and hope.' His spirit had discovered not a doctrine but a Person. This was a conversion. Four years later he could write:

The work is real. I can no more doubt it than I can my own existence. The whole current of my desires is altered, I am walking quite another way, though I am incessantly stumbling in that way.

Henceforth we know the same Martyn, but with a liberating change: a Martyn with emotions still intense, perhaps even intensified; all his life more quickly moved than most men whether to delight or tears; his heart raised to rapture by music or by quiet scenery; while, as the price of ecstasies too intense for his physical frame, he must know a fastidiousness and quivering irritation almost inconceivable to men of firmer build. But no longer was this Martyn to be the slave of his own storms. In finding a Master he was set free, growing into gradual harmony with that 'undisturbed song of pure concert' whose notes were for the first time stealing into his ears as he read 'the words of our Saviour in the New Testament' in January 1800.

But the life of inner discipleship, then as ever, had to find expression in outward relationships, and Henry Martyn made new friendships both at Cambridge and at home. The little religious sister in Cornwall, now recognized as a comrade in experience, received, as she also delightedly wrote, long letters on their common

experience in Christ. The brother and sister used, naturally enough, the vocabulary of the evangelical revival under the Wesleys, which had created the religious atmosphere that Sally breathed. For them, any 'means of grace' from the Holy Communion to personal study of the Scriptures was 'a sacred ordinance', a group meeting for Bible study was 'a Society'¹ and united prayer was 'engaging in a social exercise,' while private devotions were 'secret duties' as against Church services or 'public duties.' Today when it is almost obsolete as an expression of life the vocabulary sounds stilted enough, but for Martyn it was pulsing with the unconquerable vitality of

*The children of the Second Birth
Whom the world cannot tame.*

The usual nickname for those in the University who took Christian discipleship with any seriousness was still 'Methodist,' a tribute to the amazing influence of John Wesley's work. In Martyn's time a few such 'Methodist' undergraduates were found at Queens' under the Master-ship of Isaac Milner. Another group of religious men belonged to Magdalene where the Master wailed that there must be 'something in the air of Magdalene that makes men Methodists. We have elected fellows . . . whom we considered to be most anti-Methodistical but they all become Methodists.' The central personality here was Professor Farish, a chemist of distinction and a man of charm, later to become well known to Martyn.

But the strongest religious influence in the University,

¹ John Wesley's *Journal* for 1st May, 1738, after his visit to the Moravians, tells of the first meeting of such a 'society' in Fetter Lane. It was to meet weekly in groups of not more than ten for confession, spiritual conference and mutual prayer. This was the forerunner of the Wesleyan Class Meeting. Charles Simeon, in order to know his flock more individually, started something between a cottage meeting and a Bible class which he also called 'a society.' He had six 'societies' meeting regularly, each with about 20 members. See H. C. G. Moule's *Life* (I.V.F. ed. p. 47.)

and as some said in all England, was wielded by a Fellow of King's, whose erect soldierly figure might any day be seen riding to the Gogmagog Hills on one of the best-bred horses in the neighbourhood. Undergraduates who a few decades later would be designated by the first syllable of the word 'pious' then had the first syllable of the word 'Simeon' shouted under their windows at night, in compliment to the Reverend Charles Simeon of King's College, one of the most typically English saints that ever lived, and perhaps the most intrepid and arresting personality of Martyn's Cambridge.

Twenty years before Martyn, Charles Simeon had come up to King's College from Eton, a most active, vehement and vivid black-eyed boy, given to dominating the circle in which he found himself. He combined an intense interest in clothes, then largely expressed in shoe-buckles and silk waistcoats, with a yet intenser interest in horse-flesh, that abode with him to the day of his death. Under the noise of his vehement talk, Charles Simeon had in him an unguessed depth of reverence, and when he found, three days after his arrival, that undergraduates were, by a now vanished college rule, compelled to take the Sacrament at half-term and again on Easter Day, his soul revolted from a formal and official entrance to the holy of holies. He set himself to preparation, reading Law's *Whole Duty of Man*, 'the only religious book I had ever heard of.' For three months his discomfort only grew, until in Passion Week when he was in 'distress of soul,' light came like a flash to his always vivid mind. 'Has God provided an Offering for me, that I may lay my sins on His head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer.' To Simeon as later to Martyn came the revelation of a Person. On Easter Sunday he awoke with the words 'Jesus Christ is risen today, Hallelujah!' upon his lips and in his heart, and went to church in a passion of glad conviction. After the service some morsels of the con-

secrated bread remained, and the clergyman handed them to Simeon and some others. Simeon, his heart still at worship, covered his face in prayer while he ate, then looked up to find that, inconceivable as it may now seem, the clergyman was smiling at so rare and so unnecessary a display of enthusiasm.'

From that day the taint of 'enthusiasm,' so much dreaded in the eighteenth century, made Simeon a marked man in the University and a considerable anxiety to his family, his brother writing plaintively enough 'I trust that in the common course of things your zeal will slacken a little.' Simeon suffered under his isolation, for he was warm-hearted; but there was also that in him which leapt to the call of battle.

There were two sides to Charles Simeon. On one side he lived, almost upheld by men, a life of very simple discipleship, of which we learn by stray phrases that reveal the man; as when he breaks out wistfully, 'Oh that Jesus were to be at the wedding, with what joy I should go then'; or as when a friend, failing to make him hear, burst into his room to find that active, dominating person lost in contemplation and murmuring again and again 'Glory, glory, glory to the Son of God.' This little-known side of his life he maintained by rising at four, and spending the hours till breakfast in meditation with his 'little old quarto Bible.'

He had another and a very different side 'to face the world with' as he proceeded magnificently to defy the scorn of Cambridge. Shortly after his ordination to a fellowship of King's in 1782 he accepted, against a fury of local opposition, a living of the value of £40 a year, in order that Trinity Church might give him a pulpit from which to speak his message to the city. It is doubtful whether Simeon in all his long life ever knew what it was to speak in an uncertain tone; and in his pulpit, preaching, as he would have said, to perishing souls of the truths of eternity and the deepest convictions of his own heart,

his vehement earnestness of voice and gesture struck Cambridge as 'lively' but 'grotesque.' 'Oh, Mamma, what is the gentleman in a passion about?' cried a little girl who heard such preaching for the first time. Mamma might very properly have replied that Simeon was in a passion, and never out of it, for the neglected honour of his Lord.

It went the round that this Fellow of King's (like the members of the Holy Club at Oxford half a century before) was in the habit of visiting poor felons in the jail and of poking into cottages in insalubrious lanes. But the limit was reached when the respectability of Trinity Church was invaded by the great unwashed. The respectable pew-holders locked up their square family pews and sat in satisfied propriety at home, leaving Simeon to preach to such of the peasantry of the neighbouring villages (for these tramped miles to hear him) and Cambridge lanes as could stand in the aisles. He placed benches in the aisles, but the churchwardens, with all the joy of battle, threw them out into the churchyard. He started an evening service, a shocking innovation in days when evensong was generally droned through in the sleepest part of Sunday afternoon, and the cost of candles saved.

Such a 'Methodist' with such outrageous practices was fair game for undergraduate wit, and it became a regular Sunday 'rag' to bait Simeon. You could stand outside and throw pebbles at the windows while you waited to harry the congregation on their way out; or you could go inside and stand upon the seats or stroll about the aisles, with suitable cat-calls to a friend in another part of the church, and witty comments on all that Simeon did. 'Why, how long the old hypocrite goes on a-praying!' you felt bound to say, as he bowed his head before the sermon which was to be for you an opportunity of aping his grotesque and passionate gesture. The sermon was the great encounter, and Simeon knew it, and knew too that he could expect no support from

University authorities. He had only his own dominating personality and his terrible eye with which to oppose the rowdies. And Sunday after Sunday the miracle happened, and the man with his overwhelming earnestness imposed silence so long as he chose to preach, the hurly-burly breaking out again when he left the pulpit and they were no longer under the domination of that flashing eye. As an old man he used to say that he had never met but two gownsmen who 'ever were daring enough to meet my eye.'

In Martyn's days he was midway in his career, still doubtful whether another Fellow would be seen to walk across the grass of the college court with him; his disciples still running the gauntlet of University scorn, but forming now a perceptible group, in which 'Father Simeon' held his half-tender and half-autocratic sway. When Henry Martyn became a regular attendant at Trinity in 1799, Simeon had already started tea-drinking, later to become his famous 'conversation parties' for gownsmen, at which, after welcoming his guests with the polish and the dignity of a courtier, he sat erect in a high chair, by a scientifically-mended fire (a special crotchets) and dealt out the counsel of a tried and courageous Christian, while two servants handed tea to the slightly embarrassed undergraduates.¹

This was Martyn's leader in the new path; a man always vivid, often quaintly humorous, generally domineering, but with touching gentleness; a man of whom the landlady of the 'Eagle and Child' was heard to remark confidentially in the London coach, 'He looks proud, he walks proud, he talks proud, and he *is* proud,' but a man in whom his relationship to Christ worked wonderful flashes of humility: as when he wrote in apology to a groom whom he had rated for putting the wrong bridle on his horse, 'I earnestly beg his pardon, and am sorry for what I said to him.'

¹ See H. C. G. Moule's *Charles Simeon* (I.V.F. ed. pp. 131ff.).

A specimen of the guidance Martyn had is found in Simeon's treatment of what was still the favourite subject for theological worry—the Arminian and Calvinistic controversy. A letter written long after Martyn had left Cambridge may yet serve to show us Simeon's habitual and most independent treatment of such questions:

The truth is not in the middle, and not in one extreme but in both extremes. . . . Here are two extremes, Calvinism and Arminianism (for you need not to be told how long Calvin and Arminius lived before St Paul). 'How do you move in reference to these, Paul? In a golden mean?' 'No'—'To one extreme?' 'No.' 'How then?' 'To both extremes; today I am a strong Calvinist, tomorrow a strong Arminian'—'Well, well, Paul, I see thou art beside thyself; go to Aristotle and learn the golden mean.'

But I am unfortunate; I formerly read Aristotle, and liked him very much; I have since read Paul and caught some of his strange notions, oscillating (not vacillating) from pole to pole. Sometimes I am a high Calvinist, at other times a low Arminian, so that if extremes will please you, I am your man; only remember, it is not one extreme that we are to go to, but *both* extremes.¹

In lesser questions his 'young friends' found his advice both fatherly and robust. He would have them work; but 'remember,' said he, 'your success in the Senate House depends much on the care you take of the three-mile stone out of Cambridge.' Most sound counsel for one of Martyn's build who in 1799 and 1800 was all but a recluse, working with the eagerness that gained for him the title of 'the man who never lost an hour.'

The examination for degrees took place in January 1801. Henry knew that, having no advantage of family or wealth, his social prospects, and in part those of his sister also, depended upon the honours that he took. It was true that he was now easily first in his college

¹ H. C. G. Moule, *Charles Simeon* (I.V.F. ed. p. 77).

examinations; but the year was said to be an unusually brilliant one in the University.

The examination of those days began before breakfast on a January morning, a moment at which spirits are apt to be at a low ebb. As Martyn passed under the fluted columns of the Senate House portico, there flashed into his agitated mind the text of a sermon heard not long ago—'Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not, saith the Lord.' Steadied, as an over-excited child by his father's voice, he went in and wrote with a mind 'composed and tranquillized,' and retained his calm through the three long mornings of the *viva voce*, when the honours men sat round a table in the ice-cold Senate House with an examiner at their head, who propounded a problem which all worked at topmost speed. When the first man had handed in his solution another problem was read out, with the result that the slower men missed many of the questions. At night in the rooms of one of the moderators more difficult work was set, in which the race for speed was not so great, and men had a choice of problems offered them.

The results were published on the fourth day; and, at not quite twenty years of age, Henry Martyn found that his darling ambition had been realized, and he was Senior Wrangler.

CHAPTER IV

FELLOW OF ST JOHN'S

THE ordeal of the degree examination was followed two months later by what was then considered the still more searching test of the examination for the Smith's Prizes, in which less was required of the reproduction of book-work, and more of mathematical thought. Martyn held his own and went home at Easter to receive the congratulations of his old schoolmaster and all the Cornish cousinry, as Senior Wrangler and first Smith's Prizeman of a brilliant year.

Only Sally was dissatisfied and told him so. Cambridge meant little to her, and her brother's religion meant much; in this she was not content with his rate of progress.

He returned to Cambridge to take pupils and prepare for the examination for a fellowship that was an almost certain reward of such distinctions as his.

This second stage of Martyn's Cambridge life was less crowded with relentless tasks and richer in friendship and in growth than his undergraduate days. Martyn was never by nature a mathematician only. A friend writes:¹ 'His mathematical acquisitions clearly left him without a rival of his own age: and yet, to have known only the employment of his more free and unfettered moments would have led to the conclusion that poetry and the classics were his predominant passions.' He would often rest his own mind by composing verses as he walked into the country round Cambridge.

Always, too, there were the immortals and he tells us that he read now 'some choruses of Sophocles,' or again, 'Euripides till very late,' and confesses that just before

¹ Archdeacon C. J. Horne quoted by Sargent, p. 439.

he left for India he allowed himself an Æschylus and a Pindar, not without scruples as to whether he should afford the price.

There was more space now in Martyn's Cambridge life for friendship, and Charles Simeon drew him into closer intimacy and would often ask him to drink tea when they would sit together, Simeon erect in his high chair under that 'beautiful old painting of the Crucifixion' which he hoped they would hang before him on his death-bed. He would quietly rub his hands together, as was his way in moments of placid enjoyment, while he talked with one so eagerly and so respectfully responsive.

To Simeon Martyn owed many of the friendships of these years, and above all his very beautiful intimacy with John Sargent of King's, who had taken his degree with Martyn but was not personally known to him till Simeon's introduction.

Young Sargent, heir of a Sussex squire, had shown at Eton 'a decided superiority in the manly sports of the playground, with high classical attainments.' When he came up to Cambridge he was one of the only two gownsmen whom Simeon's eye had been unable to quell, a fact which the latter did not fail to appreciate. And when conviction entered the soul of the young rioter, and Sargent placed himself on the side of the 'serious' undergraduates, Charles Simeon welcomed him to a life-long friendship.

Through the pen of his son-in-law¹ we see Sargent as a man of gracious charm. Both he and Martyn 'belonged to a school of Attic elegance which is declining amongst us—a school of men who studied the classics, not as a means by which to obtain distinction, nor merely to acquire in the knowledge of another language a key to fresh mental attainments, but for their own sweetness. These were men whose whole spirit breathed of classical refinement.'

¹ Bishop Samuel Wilberforce who wrote a short memoir of Sargent as an introduction to the *Journals* of Henry Martyn.

To these two friends Charles Simeon sounded a call. To them as to all the choice youth whom he gathered into the inner circle of his friendship it was his way to speak again and again of 'the transcendent excellence of the Christian ministry.' But in Sargent and in Martyn the words of their leader roused very different feelings.

Sargent who 'seemed scarcely able to comprehend the pleasure of owning anything unless he could give it to another' was destined to become a substantial Sussex landowner. He carried in the year 1801 the spirit of a son of Francis in the year 1210. 'Could I have been assured that it was God's will that I should serve Him as a minister, were it to preach to the wild Indians,' he told a friend, '*nothing* should stand in my way.' But parental orders were distinct. He was to go to the Temple and 'follow the profession of the law' as a valuable training for the future head of a landed family.

With intense pain of spirit, after being 'tossed about for a long time' he decided that Simeon's call was not for him, and bent to the parental will as to discipline from his divine Master. The effect of the self-conquest was manifest to his friends. 'Sargent seems to be outstripping us all' wrote Martyn.

In Martyn's mind Charles Simeon's exhortations had struck a very different and a jarring note. His University honours placed him in a position to choose his path, and the very profession from which Sargent shrank seemed to Martyn alluring, as a path to money, position and studious leisure. 'I could not consent,' he says, 'to be poor for Christ's sake.' He knew the humiliation served out to Simeon's friends in clerical life, and had seen how, if Simeon were absent, his curate was left with an impossible burden of duty because no cleric in the town or University would demean himself by serving in that notorious parish.

But Martyn's attitude to life was changing, in part through Sargent's friendship, and still more through great draughts of Bible reading and solitary prayer in green

places by the Cambridge river during the long vacation of 1801. That summer marks an epoch in his life. 'Not until then,' he said, 'had I ever experienced any real pleasure in religion.' The taste which grew in him then for solitude, and especially for solitude out of doors, went with him through life.

At this time Martyn was revealing himself in his scrupulously transparent journal, written without a shred of self-excuse, as in the sight of God and all His angels, and perhaps the most remarkable human document left by the Church of his day. Entry after entry like those which follow serves to give us a glimpse of the growing taste for solitude, a solitude at first full of conscious effort, but into which there stole the sense of a Presence so sweet that all earthly joys went less to that communion.

I walked in the fields and endeavoured to consider my ways, and to lift up my heart to God.

Walked to the hawthorn hedge. . . . I devoted myself to Him solemnly, and trust that when tempted to sin I shall remember this walk.

Had a sweet, supporting sense of God's presence in the evening, when I walked by moonlight.

I determined to give all the rest of the day to acts of devotion without going into hall to dinner. So I retired to the garden.

During my walk, my mind was too much engaged in the composition of poetry, which I found to leave me far short of that sweetness I seemed in a frame to enjoy. Yet on the spot where I have often found the presence of God, the spirit of prayer returned.

My imagination takes to itself wings and flies to some wilderness where I may hold converse in solitude with God.

Was empty and tired for want of being alone.

Let me but ply heart-work in secret, let me but walk alone in communion with God, and I shall surely be able to offer Him sacrifices more pure.

From the church I walked to our garden, where I was alone an hour, I trust with Christ.

The sudden appearance of evil thoughts made me very unhappy, but I found refuge in God. O may the Lord . . . make me to find in Himself, the source and centre of beauty, a sweet and satisfied delight.

A man cannot yield himself to such Companionship without being moulded by it, and the Martyn who thought that he 'could not consent to be poor for Christ's sake' found himself writing to Sally in September, 1801:

The soul that has truly experienced the love of God will not stay meanly inquiring how much he shall do, and thus limit his service; but will be earnestly seeking more and more to know the will of our heavenly Father that he may be enabled to do it.

He did not reach his final decision as to the choice of a career until the long vacation of 1802. When he returned to Cambridge his mind was made up. He would seek ordination and accept an invitation from Charles Simeon to become his curate. The decision was not easy to announce in Cambridge, as his journal shows.

Was ashamed to confess to — that I was to be Simeon's curate, a despicable fear of man.

Five months before reaching this determination Martyn had obtained his fellowship (5th April, 1802), and had followed it up by winning the first of the only University prizes open to middle bachelors, the Members' Prize for a Latin essay which he must declaim in public. Sargent says that 'men of great classical celebrity' contested it with him. We can only wonder the more at the ease of the stride with which, after three years of close mathematical work, he returned to the classics that he loved.

The new Fellow, in rooms in the corner of the lovely second court of St John's, lived a life at once sociable and solitary. Men found him accessible, for with all his love of pretty manners he was remarkable, an old school-fellow tells us, for 'simplicity and ease.' The journal shows

a large acquaintance and it shows too that the men who climbed his staircase had a way of staying to talk long, and sometimes longer than he liked.

Interrupted by R. who stayed till nine. Our conversation was on mathematics.

Some of my acquaintance drank wine with me. I was more careful about offending them by overmuch strictness than of offending God by conformity to the world.

From seven to twelve wasted by repeated calls of friends.

Insensibly passed the whole time in talking about music.

I had promised to walk with — which was perfectly hateful to me at this time, when I had such need of being alone with God.

For he was living now in two worlds and the man who at one moment had all heaven before his eyes, at another was terribly mortified because 'fear of man' kept him from saying grace when two visitors from Clare Hall came to breakfast. The *Journal* shows him always accessible to younger men in need of help with mathematics, and his schoolfellow, Dr Carlyon, had memories of running to Martyn's room in trouble over the Eleventh Book of Newton and watching him push aside a massive Bible, pick up an odd sheet of paper and with a few miraculous lines sweep away all his difficulties.

As Fellow, Martyn took his share in conducting the college examinations, then largely oral; at different times he examined in Butler, Locke, Xenophon, Juvenal and Euripides. It cost him a good deal of nervous *malaise* to examine before his brother Fellows. Here again he was living in two worlds.

There was something of a sacred impression on my mind during the examination in hall; several of the poetical images in Virgil in which they had been examining, especially those taken from nature, together with the sight of the moon rising over the venerable walls, and sending its light through the painted glass, turned away my thoughts from present things and raised them to God.

Did any trembling candidate wonder at a sudden and other-worldly illumination in the face of the man who was examining him 'with great ease and clearness'? And did the dining Fellows catch a strange light on his face in hall at times? There was, for example, the occasion when the conversation at their table was of 'stones falling from the moon,' and

my imagination began to ascend among the shining worlds hung in the midst of space, and to glance from one to another; and my heart bounded at the thought that I was going a much surer way to behold the glories of the Creator hereafter, than by giving up my time to speculations about them.

Those were the years when men expected Bonaparte to sail across the Channel, and the loyal University formed its volunteer corps with 'a grave uniform.' Martyn used to drill the Fellows, perhaps as the youngest and most active member of that learned body. He wrote to Sargent that he was passing his summer 'amid the din of arms. I give our drilling this lofty title.'

With all his share in college life and work, Martyn yet gave the impression to his colleagues of one who had his being in another world, and they resented it as men always resent the involuntary absorption of the artist or the saint. His young severity also offered scope for wit.

Went into the combination room after dinner, where some of those present kept me constantly employed by asking me questions to make me speak against the usual amusements of men.

So he walked among them uncomprehended and often uncomprehending, with involuntary aloofness, and yet equally with a new yearning towards every human soul, that would lead him at the end of a long day's work to read aloud to his bedmaker. It is a strange picture of the rapt young scholar by the lamp, reading St Luke to the frowzy old lady who could not read for herself. Did she catch the meaning of his ministrations, or did she twiddle

her thumbs and possess her soul in patience under the unaccountableness of her gentleman's new whim?

This new-found care of the once fastidious Martyn for the souls of dull and shabby personages was immensely strengthened when in the autumn of 1802 he read the life of David Brainerd¹ and found his hero. He who would know Martyn must ask what manner of man was that Brainerd who called out his depths of admiration.

Martyn's hero was born at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1718, of a Puritan family that named him David and his brothers Hezekiah, Nehemiah, John and Israel. In turning over the yellow leaves of his life one finds that this son of Calvinistic Independents, this Presbyterian minister of the mid-eighteenth century, was a saint spiritually akin to Francis and to Raymond Lull, to all the bearers of the stigmata and all the great spiritual lovers throughout the ages.

In the forenoon, [says Brainerd] while I was looking on the Sacramental elements, and thinking that Jesus Christ would soon be "set forth crucified before me," my soul was filled with light and love, so that I was almost in an ecstasy; . . . and I felt at the same time an exceeding tenderness and most fervent love towards all mankind. . . . My soul was drawn out very much for the world; I grasped for multitudes of souls.

The language of my thoughts and disposition (although I spoke no words) now were, Here I am, Lord, send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough, the savage Pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort in earth . . . send me even to death itself if it be but in Thy service and to Thy kingdom.

To the wilderness he was sent, little strength and little taste as he had for it. A hillside which for Martyn's generation would have been 'romantic' was for Brainerd and his fellow-settlers, who thought of it in terms of weary and dangerous travel, 'a hideous mountain.' Into

¹ *An Account of the Life of David Brainerd* by Jonathan Edwards, Edinburgh, 1798.

the 'hideous and howling wilderness' Brainerd was sent to be the missionary and shepherd of the Indian tribes pushed backwards by advancing settlers. 'My Indians,' 'my poor Indians,' or 'my dear little flock' he called them, gave them his heart and lived for them under conditions that to him were hateful. His diet as he told his brother John was 'mostly of hasty pudding, boiled corn, and bread baked in the ashes and sometimes a little meat and butter. My lodging is a little heap of straw, laid upon some boards, a little way from the ground, for it is a log room, without any floor that I lodge in.' For his Indians he made apostolic journeys to camps on the Susquehannah river, himself fast dying of consumption.

Near night, my beast that I rode upon hung one of her legs in the rocks, and fell down under me. . . . She broke her leg; and being in such a hideous place, and near thirty miles from any house . . . was obliged to kill her, and to prosecute my way on foot . . . just at dark we kindled a fire, cut up a few bushes, and made a shelter over our heads to save us from the frost, which was very hard that night.

When Brainerd died at the age of thirty-two, having spent his last night on earth in 'very proper discourse' with his brother John concerning 'the interest of religion among the Indians,' the forest round his settlement was full of leafy cells into which his Indian Christians would steal at dawn for secret prayer.

This was the life that made an irresistible appeal to Martyn.

I thought of David Brainerd, and ardently desired his devotedness to God and holy breathings of soul.

Read David Brainerd today and yesterday, and find as usual my spirit greatly benefited by it. I long to be like him; let me forget the world and be swallowed up in a desire to glorify God.

Read Brainerd. I feel my heart knit to this dear man, and really rejoice to think of meeting him in heaven.

It was to Simeon the leader that Martyn owed the suggestion of the path by which he was to follow Brainerd. Simeon, as he lived his industrious days in Cambridge, had his eyes set towards the east. To Martyn on his return from Cornwall in 1802 with the resolution to be ordained, he said some eager words about the good done 'by *one* missionary in India,' the immortal cobbler Dr Carey, whose *Periodical Accounts* from Serampore he earnestly followed.

Martyn listened to his leader; then he read Brainerd; the appeal of Simeon's words and of Brainerd's life lived together in his mind through the autumn of 1802; against them were all the inclinations of his nature. When the last leaves were falling from the elms in the Fellows' garden 'he was at length fixed in a resolution to imitate Brainerd's example.' And he proposed to do it by offering himself as a missionary to the tiny new society formed in London by some of Simeon's acquaintance under the title of 'The Society for Missions to Africa and the East.'¹

Martyn's decision startled his world almost as much as if he had proposed a flight to the moon; and not the least surprised people were the committee of the little missionary society gathered in the study of a London rectory. Since their foundation in 1799 no Englishman had offered to serve them as a foreign missionary, and in the month when Martyn sent his enquiry (November 1802) they had interviewed two young German pietists, an interview not without its difficulties, since neither the committee nor the candidates knew many words of the other party's language. The secretary of the committee now received an astonishing enquiry about service from a young scholar who, as far as university preferments were concerned, had the ball at his feet.

Both in Cambridge and in Cornwall Martyn's step was regarded as fantastic and absurd.

¹ Known today as the Church Missionary Society.

Walked out in the evening in great tranquillity and on my return met with Mr C., with whom I was obliged to walk an hour longer. He thought it a most improper step for me to leave the University to preach to the ignorant heathen, which any person could do.

Such was the University opinion of the missionary vocation. In Cornwall it was much the same:

Breakfasted with——, he had but a slight opinion of missionary work, though he has, I know, great affection for me. . . . Dined at——'s who used every argument to dissuade me from going to India.

To Sally he confided, 'The thought that I might be unceasingly employed in the same kind of work, amongst poor ignorant people, is what my proud spirit revolts at. To be obliged to submit to a thousand uncomfortable things that must happen to me whether as a minister or a missionary is what the flesh cannot endure.'

Even Sally was not encouraging.

Received a letter from my sister in which she expressed her opinion of my unfitness for the work.

Martyn was half inclined to agree with her and the *Journal* shows a picture of steady self-discipline, 'to fit me for a long life of warfare and constant self-denial.'

How mortally do I hate the thought, yet certainly I will do the will of God, if I be cut piece-meal.

I resolved on my knees to live a life of far more self-denial than I had ever yet done, and to begin with little things. Accordingly I ate my breakfast standing at a distance from the fire, and stood reading at the window during the morning, though the thermometer stood at freezing-point. . . . To climb the steep ascent, to run, to fight, to wrestle was the desire of my heart.

CHAPTER V

A CURACY AMONG THE EVANGELICALS

ON an October morning in 1803 Henry Martyn hired a gig and bowled out of Cambridge through the autumn lanes to Ely, to be examined by the Bishop's chaplain, and to be ordained next day in the Cathedral. He went into the Bishop's chapel, and kneeling there before his examination felt 'great shame at having come so confidently to offer myself to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ with so much ignorance and unholiness.' The examination of candidates for ordination in 1803 was an almost casual affair, and Martyn's preparation, mental and spiritual, had been left to his own devices.

Rarely did a candidate present himself with mind more soaked in Holy Scripture, or who took with a more awful reverence 'authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God and to preach the same.' Three times daily in his college rooms he bathed his soul in Holy Writ; and on walks to Lolworth or Shelford, or on solitary rides he learned whole books by heart. The details in the *Journal* show that his imagination, jealously watched and repressed in some directions, had free play here:

Read the Psalms with a bright light shining upon them.

Read the Acts this morning with great delight. I love to dwell in sacred scenes other than those which pass before me, and especially those in which the men of God are concerned.

Read the latter end of the Revelation, and so very lively was the impression on my mind, that I was often in tears. So awful, so awakening was this book to me.

But the book that was above all the home of his spirit

and to which, perhaps insensibly, he returned the most, was the prophecy of Isaiah.

Hoped to enjoy some of the peace and joy I used to feel in reading Isaiah but was interrupted. [Or again] In great sorrow I read some of Isaiah.

It was his lifelong love, and in the great Bible that he took with him to India this book more than any other is interlined, in his free and delicate penmanship, with readings from the Septuagint or Hebrew.

Butler and Paley he read as the indispensable apologists of his day; and on them the examining chaplain set most of his questions.

But Martyn had also browsed in experimental divinity. He had found for himself St Augustine's *Confessions*, then strangely out of fashion, and dismissed a generation later by Macaulay as 'an interesting book marred in places by the style of a field preacher,' but calling to the deeps in Martyn; William Law: 'rather a favourite of mine'; and above all, one Jonathan Edwards, a name unknown to examining chaplains, was the man of Martyn's heart. Born in Connecticut in the days of Queen Anne and educated at 'Yale College,' bred up a Calvinist and ordained a Presbyterian minister, he was a man whose books show him to have been 'a seer oppressed by his tremendous faith.'

I often used to sit and view the moon for a long time; and so in the day time, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things. . . . And scarce anything, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning . . . it rejoiced me. I felt God at the first appearance of a thunderstorm.

This vivid, emotional nature so congenial to Martyn, was joined with a lucid, systematizing mind. Before going to his first cure Edwards recorded among his resolutions: 'Resolved, when I think of any Theorem in Divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving

it if Circumstances don't hinder.' And so there came thundering out of the wilderness books to which Martyn turned again and again as the most satisfying body of divinity: Jonathan Edwards on *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended*, virile, incisive, terrible. Jonathan Edwards on *The History of Redemption*, clear-cut and all but debonair. But above all Jonathan Edwards, *Concerning Religious Affections*, as searching in its scrutiny of human motive as the discipline of any monastic confessor.

Such reading was Martyn's preparation for the ministry. The examining chaplain gave him a test in New Testament Greek, in theological Latin, with some questions in Christian evidences, and set him free.

After leaving the palace I was in very low spirits. I had now nothing to think of but the weight and difficulty of the work which lay before me.

Next morning

At half-past ten we went to the cathedral. During the ordination and Sacramental services I sought in vain for a humble heavenly mind. The outward shew which tended to inspire solemnity affected me more than the faith of Christ's presence, giving me the commission to preach the gospel.

With inward struggle, then, Martyn's ministry began, and with struggle it continued. Without other training than a resident fellowship in the University, he was thrust as Simeon's curate into the care of the little parish of Lolworth four miles out of Cambridge. There, among his country folk, or in the almshouses and lanes of the city where Simeon set him to visit, he felt 'a mere school-boy' with words and manner smacking of college rather than of life, and perhaps hiding from his hearers the very realities he was struggling to express.

H. and my other friends complained of my speaking too low and with too little elocution. These things, with the difficulty I had found in making sermons, and the poorness of

them, made me appear exceedingly contemptible to myself. I began to see (and amazing is it to say) for the first time, that I must be content to take my place among men of second-rate abilities.

Later, Mr Cecil, of St John's, Bedford Row, added his brisk advice:

Mr Cecil has been taking a great deal of pains with me. My insipid inanimate manner in the pulpit, he says, is intolerable. Sir, said he, it is cupola-painting, not miniature, that must be the aim of a man that harangues a multitude.

Diligent pastoral visiting was the rule for Simeon's curates, and it was no easy rule to Martyn. 'It is my will rather to sit down, to please myself with reading, and let the world perish.' Yet day after day he was driven out from this congenial world of books by a sense of terrible responsibility. It is clear that he often stayed too long in a sick-room, but he left his people with no possible doubt that someone cared for their souls. The *Journal* is full of vignettes.

Wished for nothing but to be doing the work of Christ and went in this frame to visit the woman and her son. The room was so exceedingly offensive that I could scarcely endure it for an instant, yet by care I was able to continue for about half an hour.

Went to see a poor young woman, who after a life of sin, appears to be in a dying state, though only seventeen; she was in too much pain to attend to me much, and so I withdrew, affected almost to tears. My heart was ready to burst when I thought of the man who had seduced her.

After church called at two of the cottages. In one the man, the father of a large family, and in the other the mother . . . told me in the course of conversation that they used the belief as their favourite prayer at night. I was perfectly shocked.

All his life Martyn would be 'perfectly shocked' at what another man would meet with a rueful smile. All his friends note in him a certain 'simplicity' which always

credited others with the spiritual standards of his own life, and left him unshielded against many a rude encounter with things as they were.

There is no denying the fact that these years in Simeon's parish were years of overwork. College life and interests went on as before, and to these were added the cure of Lolworth, with cottage visiting and catechizing in the school ('I seem able to instruct children'), and a share of the work in Trinity parish, sermons, week-day services, visits to hospital, almshouses, workhouse, sick-beds and meetings of 'Societies' for Bible study.

Martyn's reward and relaxation after work was the grammar of some Eastern language. A grammar was to him what a novel is to the ordinary tired mortal:

Finished the Bengalee¹ grammar which I began yesterday.

Wasted much time in looking over an Arabic grammar.

Finding myself in great stupidity I took up the Hindoostanee grammar, that the time might not pass away without any profit.

Very unwillingly left Bengalee for writing sermon.

Thus greedily and by snatches, as a delightful relaxation, Martyn worked on Persian and Arabic, Gilchrist's Hindustani Dictionary and Reader (a pioneer work) and Halhed's Bengali Grammar for which the first printed type ever made in that script was punched with his own hands by Sir Charles Wilkins, the orientalist, who under Warren Hastings first made Britain aware of the treasures hidden in Sanskrit literature.

Yet another side of Henry Martyn struggled for life. At one moment he renounced earthly beauty as 'ensnaring' and set off to pray by a bed in the workhouse. At another he gave her a hesitating welcome as a handmaid to worship.

¹ Here as elsewhere in quotations from Martyn or others of his day their spelling of oriental words is preserved; perhaps it may help to place them in their setting as pioneer workers before the days of comparative phonetics.

The music and the sight of a rural scene of solitude had the effect of fixing my thoughts on heaven.

I heard the chant at King's with the same emotions of devotion.

The sanctity of the place and the music, brought heaven and eternal things and the presence of God very near to me.

But with what circumspection he admits her, even as a handmaid, to the sanctuary and with what jealousy lest his profane love assume more than the handmaid's place! Henry Martyn's hymnbook, like John Wesley's, would have been prefaced with the caution that 'what is of infinitely more moment than the spirit of poetry is the spirit of piety.'

At this moment in his life, like his namesake who slashed at his cloak that the beggar might have half, Martyn was cutting ruthlessly at his own intellectual and æsthetic life, for the sake of the souls of the poor. Like his leader Simeon, he observed days of fasting and abstinence, but his true fast was that which he imposed on his intellectual and artistic appetites. Yet even as he crushed back his desires for beauty he found that his lips were laid at her very source.

My heart adored the Lord as the author and source of all the intellectual beauty that delighted me; as the creator of all the fair scenes that employ the poet's pen; and as the former of the mind that can find pleasure in beauty. . . . My soul seems labouring still with the mysterious glories of religion. What shall appear to this soul when I die? What shall appear of God's glory while I live? Since I have known God . . . painting, poetry and music, have had charms unknown to me before. I have received what I suppose is a taste for them: for religion has . . . made my mind susceptible of impressions from the sublime and beautiful.

With the unfailing paradox of the gospel, Henry Martyn had lost his life only to find it, heightened and summed up in Christ,

*Ubi non praevenit rem desiderium
Nec desiderio minus est praemium.*

The *Journal* during the Cambridge curacy shows signs of unwilling preoccupation with legal business. Martyn suddenly learned that the slender fortune left him by his father was totally lost, and his unmarried sister Sally dependent on him. Henry's plans were now thrown into confusion. He could not feel justified in accepting the subsistence allowance of a missionary, and leaving Sally in distress. Bishop Wilberforce says that for nearly three years (1803-5) the family financial questions 'often harassed his conscience, engrossing much of his time, and deeply depressing his spirits.' 'Unless Providence should see fit to restore our property,' Martyn told Sargent, 'I see no possibility of my going out [to India].' But his friends pointed out another opening.

Charles Grant, from one of the Chairs in Leadenhall Street, was looking anxiously for chaplains to work under the East India Company in Bengal. The Company's salary would enable Martyn to support Sally; and the need for good men was great. 'The clergy in Bengal,' Sir John Shore had written home in 1795, 'are not respectable characters.' If they did not die 'of drinking punch in the torrid zone,' they were apt to retire with large fortunes amassed in a surprisingly short time.

Martyn was not sanguine. Professor Farish warned him of the danger of 'worldly-mindedness' as a Company's servant. He read Tennant's *India* and decided that the life would be odious to the last degree. Then he turned to the Bengali Grammar or to Brainerd's *Life* and was all aflame to go, no matter how.

The business involved interviews in London and visits to the India House. There were journeys to town on the 'Telegraph' coach, which told an incredulous public that it could travel in seven hours from Cambridge to the City. There were visits to Leadenhall Street when Martyn must go past the two gorgeous porters into the very house where sat a clerk with a snuff-coloured coat and an unforgettable smile, by name Charles Lamb.

He was ushered into the stately presence of Charles Grant, whose mastery of Indian commerce was making him 'the real ruler of the rulers of the east, the Director of the Court of Directors,' but who none the less met with considerable opposition when he proposed to send men of the 'Methodist' taint to India. Between the business interviews there was all London for the Cornishman to see. The slight black-clad figure 'called at the booksellers'; visited the British Museum; listened to the Gresham Lecture on Music; sat on a bench in St James's Park beside a poor man 'of a very passionate and disappointed spirit,' into whose hand he slipped a coin; or went to the New London Tavern in Cheapside to hear a farewell charge given to the two young German missionaries who were being sent out to West Africa. 'I shook hands and almost wished to go with them, but certainly to go to India.'

Another day he stood at the gate of St James's to see the nobility go to court. The yellow coaches rolled past with turbans and fans, garters and swords, to the dull court of the dull old king, and Martyn standing on the pavement wondered at 'such a glare of finery on poor old shrivelled people.' But in the streets where the 'first gentleman of Europe' set the fashion, temptation waited for Martyn, for 'him even,' when arch glances were directed at him and buxom charms displayed. He 'made a covenant with his eyes,' and kept it, throwing himself at once into prayer for the bold hussy or the fine lady who caught his eye.

So he saw the streets; but a social circle was waiting too for Simeon's curate, in the rural villas bordering Clapham Common. Charles Grant took him down one afternoon from the India House, giving him upon the road 'much information on the state of India' and introducing him, in time for dinner, to William Wilberforce, a wiry bright-eyed figure, with powdered hair, a diamond brooch in his linen, and an eyeglass which he fingered while he talked his unforgettable talk, swift-wheeling as

a swallow's flight, described by spell-bound listeners as 'vivacious,' 'radiant,' 'aerial.'

Here Martyn found his welcome to the innermost circle of the men then fighting the slave trade, the 'Clapham saints,' the 'first friends of the negro.' The group has been accused of smugness. They *spoke* smugly, perhaps, but their souls knew how to worship and to dare. Granville Sharp the ordnance clerk 'sat at his desk with a soul as distended as that of a Paladin bestriding his warhorse,'¹ and being persuaded that America was right in her War of Independence threw away his livelihood rather than copy the account of a cargo of munitions which had been used against her. Young Clarkson wrote a Latin Essay for a university prize, on the set subject 'Is it right to make slaves of other men against their will?' No doubt his periods were smug enough, but he was not the man to shelter under phrases. 'If the contents of my essay are true,' he cried, 'it is time some one should see these calamities to their end,' and forthwith threw himself into a lifelong grapple with vested interests and semi-sacred institutions. In Parliament the group were known as 'men who looked to the facts of the case and not to the wishes of the minister.'²

This group Martyn joined and fell like the rest of them under the spell of Wilberforce's voice of rare cadences. That was a red-letter day when he dined alone with Wilberforce at Palace Yard.

It was very agreeable, as there was no one else. Speaking of the slave trade . . . and found my heart so affected that I could with difficulty refrain from tears. . . . Went with Mr W. to the House of Commons, where I was surprised and charmed with Mr Pitt's eloquence.

They introduced him, too, to old John Newton, the friend of Cowper, now the Nestor of the evangelicals,

¹ Stephen, *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*.

² Trevelyan, *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, p. 71.

widowed and blind, but with undiminished courage and a pawky humour.

Breakfasted with the venerable Mr Newton. . . . He said he had heard of a clever gardener, who would sow the seeds when the meat was put down to roast, and engage to produce a salad by the time it was ready, but the Lord did not sow oaks in this way. . . . When I spoke of the opposition that I should be likely to meet with, he said he supposed Satan would not love me for what I was about to do.

On one of these London visits Martyn, having just reached the age of twenty-four, was ordained priest at the Chapel Royal, St James's. He was now ready at any time to obey a summons to India, but it was not till three months later that he wrote in his journal:

April 2, 1805. Went with Mr Grant towards the India House. He said that he was that day about to take the necessary steps for bringing forward the business of the chaplains, and that by tomorrow night I should know whether I could go or not.

Next day:

Going to Mr Grant's I found that the chaplaincies had been agreed to after two hours' debate, and some obloquy thrown upon Mr Grant by the Chairman for his connexion with Mr Wilberforce, and *those people*. Mr Grant said that though my nomination had not taken place, the case was now beyond danger.

Mr Grant little understood with what hidden distaste the chaplaincy was accepted. 'I could have been infinitely better pleased to have gone out as a missionary, poor as the Lord and His apostles,' Martyn confided to his journal. There is no doubt that it was true. To the man inspired by David Brainerd the acceptance of a handsome salary and the obligations of Government service were no alleviation but an addition to the difficulties of his path.

Martyn decided to leave Cambridge at once and take up his abode in London, serving as temporary curate to Mr Cecil in Bloomsbury and holding himself in readiness for orders to proceed to India with the summer fleet.

On Palm Sunday five days later, he rode out to Lolworth for the last time and preached his farewell sermon to his country folk. There were partings afterwards at the church door.

An old farmer of a neighbouring parish, as he was taking leave of me, turned aside to shed tears; this affected me more than anything. Rode away with my heart heavy.

At night he must preach his last sermon to Mr Simeon's crowded congregation at Trinity Church. It was not usual in 1805 for the people to stand as the clergy left the church, but that night, when Martyn went out, the kneeling people rose as one man and turned to watch his figure down the aisle.

CHAPTER VI

THE LOVER

ON Monday in Holy Week 1805 Martyn left Cambridge. 'A great many,' he says, 'accompanied me to the coach which took me up at the end of the town; it was a thick, misty morning, so the University with its towers and spires, was out of sight in an instant.'

The Cambridge chapter was ended, but there was another farewell which cost him more; for Henry Martyn was in love.

He had discovered it nine months before, during a summer visit to Cornwall, when although he did not know how soon the way to India might be opened, he regarded himself as among his own folk for the last time. It was a crowded visit. He must say good-bye to his sister and to all the clan of cousins and cousinly friends. He must preach too in the churches which they opened to him, though not in the church of his baptism, since he was deeply tainted with 'Methodism,' and his old school-master, hitherto proud of his pupil, now led the outcry against his pernicious views.

It was not permitted me to occupy the pulpit of my native town. . . . The clergy seemed to have united to exclude me from their churches, so that I must now be contented with my brother-in-law's two little churches about five miles from Truro.

Kenwyn, which had welcomed John Wesley, had a welcome for Henry Martyn, and when he preached there in the church among the trees through whose branches you peer down over the Truro house-tops, the people of the city came up the hill to hear him.

The church at Kenwyn was quite full, many outside, and many obliged to go away. At first beginning the service I felt very uneasy from the number of people gazing, but my peace soon returned.

Another church was open to Martyn in the ancient town of Marazion that looks sleepily from among its yellow sea poppies to St Michael's Mount, the trysting-place of Cornish legend and Cornish history. Marazion church was then a chapel-of-ease under the care of Martyn's cousin Malachy Hitchins, who lived two miles away on a wooded hill-top beside the church of St Hilary with its whitewashed spire, a landmark to the ships that made for Falmouth or Penzance. Here in the Vicarage garden with Cousin Tom Hitchins a few years older than himself 'all the happier hours' of Martyn's boyhood had been spent.

Their walks and rides had been shared by a young brood of Grenfells from a square house in Marazion Street. The love story of the youngest daughter of this house had come to grief, and Lydia Grenfell at the ripe age of thirty, was still at home, a steady annoyance to her matter-of-fact mother because of her Methodistical leanings and inclination to pious brooding. It rarely occurred to the matron of the day that a daughter of thirty was old enough to make her own decisions, and Lydia, when the maternal fiat went forth, refrained from attending the Methodist meeting-house that was for her the gate of heaven, but did not refrain from confiding her yearnings and sorrows to a religious diary.

Mr Hitchins asked Henry Martyn to Marazion for old times' sake, and on the Sunday which he spent there he made the discovery of his love for Lydia.

Called after tea on Miss Lydia Grenfell and walked with her and —, conversing on spiritual subjects. All the rest of the evening and at night I could not keep her out of my mind. I felt too plainly that I loved her passionately.

The discovery was overwhelming. It was impossible for a Henry Martyn to be a lukewarm lover. Yet this new love and his vocation seemed to him in deadly rivalry. To him the missionary call meant probable hardship and banishment for life. Supposing she could love him, could he involve his Lydia in this?

True, there was the chance of an East Indian chaplaincy; but that was yet in the air. He had lost his patrimony. His family needed his help. What had he to offer a bride, or a bride's very practical mother, unless he were to forsake his missionary vocation, and settle down at Cambridge, or perhaps in a college living? A country rectory with Lydia, and a quiet study, and children in the garden!

But no.

The direct opposition of this to my devotedness to God in the missionary way, excited no small tumult in my mind. . . . At night I continued an hour and a half in prayer, striving against this attachment. . . . But in dreams her image returned, and I awoke in the night, with my mind full of her.

His sense of vocation and his love grappled in deadlock. Next morning the call to sacrifice was uppermost. 'I again devoted myself to the Lord, and with more of my will than last night.' He took horse and rode away from St Hilary.

But there was yet a month to spend in Cornwall, a month when he was near her, and would hear friends speak of her, when a ride across the hawthorn-dotted uplands brought him to her door. An old friend, knowing nothing of his inner tumult, gave him *Thomas à Kempis* as a parting gift. The book was new to Martyn and daily during that month he read it, sometimes in a cave on the Cornish coast and sometimes late at night, drinking in its spirit of surrender.

At the end of August came his farewell to St Hilary. Lydia Grenfell's diary on 26th August, 1804, tells us that

she heard 'H.M. preach a precious sermon.' Martyn's on the same day omits the sermon but tells of the evening when he

walked with Mr Grenfell and Lydia up the hill, with the most beautiful prospect of the sea, but I was unhappy from feeling the attachment to Lydia, for I was unwilling to leave her.

The next day was the last. There was a ride to a cottage, printed for ever on his memory and referred to again and again. Five miles by wren-haunted lanes or over uplands with the peewits calling and the soft, large sea-winds buffeting, and Lydia at his side.

He spent that afternoon alone with his love.

Reading in the afternoon to Lydia alone, from Dr Watts, there happened to be among other things a prayer on entire preference of God to the creature. Now, thought I, here am I in the presence of God, and my idol. So I used the prayer for myself, and addressed it to God, who answered it I think, for my love was kindled to God and to divine things. . . . I continued conversing with her, generally with my heart in heaven, but every now and then resting on her. Parted with Lydia, perhaps for ever in this life, with a sort of uncertain pain, which I knew would increase to greater violence.

So he walked away 'dwelling at large on the excellence of Lydia,' and for the kingdom of heaven's sake he had not breathed his love. But it was not therefore unknown. A part of that 'holy simplicity' which his friends all attribute to Martyn was a transparency which neither could nor would hide from their eyes the adventures of his heart. As he passed through Plymouth on his way from Cornwall, a married sister of Lydia told Martyn 'that his attachment to her sister was not altogether unreturned.'

Such news to a Martyn, who for the kingdom of heaven's sake was leaving Cornwall with his love untold, brought 'both pleasure and pain.'

Next day he went on by coach to Exeter.

My thoughts were almost wholly occupied with Lydia, though not in a spirit of departure from God, for I considered myself as in His hands.

Martyn's spirit was regaining buoyancy. As they drove out of Bath, early on a harvest morning, 'Nothing seemed desirable but to glorify God.' So he returned to his last months under Simeon, telling himself that the love story was over.

My dear Lydia and my duty call me different ways, yet God hath not forsaken me but strengthened me. . . . At chapel my soul ascended to God, and the sight of a picture at the altar, of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness, animated me exceedingly to devotedness to the life of a missionary.

But a great love refused so soon to be deposed. They gave him an East India chaplaincy with a salary that would keep Sally and a bride as well. And they showed him a letter from Calcutta saying, 'Let him marry and come out at once.' Was all this further temptation or was it an indication of his path?

Tossed in spirit he wrote to beg for the honour of Lydia's correspondence. But no letter came. Martyn was 'keenly disappointed' yet inclined to agree with Simeon, himself unmarried, who 'said he wished me to be properly a missionary dead to the world. . . . I thought of my dear Lydia when he said this.'

Between them the saints tore him in pieces with contrary advice. Mr Cecil 'said I should be acting like a madman if I went out unmarried. A wife would supply by her comfort and counsel the entire want of society.' 'Mr Atkinson, whose opinion I revere, was against my marrying.' A letter from Mr Simeon 'immediately convinced me of the expediency of celibacy.' 'Mr Pratt coming in argued strongly on the other side.' 'I could attend to nothing else.' What lover could?

My heart was sometimes ready to break with agony, at being torn from its dearest idol; and at other times I was

visited by a few moments of sublime and enraptured joy. Such is the conflict: why have my friends mentioned this subject? It has torn open old wounds.

The time came to sail, and the celibates had it. He sent to Lydia a keepsake, 'a little *Pilgrim's Progress* enclosed in the tea-caddy,' and set off to join the East India fleet at Portsmouth, riding on the way to Sargent's Sussex home to bid his friend good-bye.

Sargent, newly married, felt that he must see the last of that lonely figure and rode down from Midhurst to Martyn's Portsmouth inn, to find him surrounded by 'numerous friends' from Cambridge and London, led by Simeon himself, who was deeply stirred, and with his usual energy despatched Bibles for distribution on Martyn's ship, and gave him a keepsake of a massive volume weighing 11 lb. 11 oz. from himself, and a silver compass from his Cambridge hearers who arranged that the day of his sailing should be set apart by them for fast and prayer.

July 16th. The Commodore called at the inn to desire that all persons might be awakened, as the fleet would sail today. We went immediately to the quay; but after waiting five hours Mr Simeon took his last leave of me, [at a long farewell it was Simeon's way to take his friend's hand in both of his and raise it to his lips] and the rest accompanied me on board.

A 'triumphal occasion,' Sargent called the moment of parting.

But even this was not the end of his farewells. 'To my no small surprise I found we were bound to Falmouth.' The news brought a torturing bliss. He was to see Cornwall again and to come once again within reach of Lydia. Was it that he might win her?

In three days' time the fleet dropped anchor in the great harbour. 'I seemed to be entirely at home,' said Martyn, 'the scene about me was so familiar, and my friends so near.' The fleet was delayed day after day.

Shore visits were possible, and 'after much deliberation' he decided to go to Marazion and tell his love and ask his Lydia if she could bring herself to come to him in India.

He went on the early mail, and did ever another lover in such case find leisure to speak to the coachmen about the welfare of their souls?

I arrived at Marazion in time for breakfast and met my beloved Lydia. In the course of the morning I walked with her . . . with much confusion I declared my affection for her, with the intention of learning whether, if I saw it right in India to be married, she would come out; but she would not declare her sentiments. She said that the shortness of arrangement was an obstacle, even if all others were removed.

'She would not declare her sentiments:' but she copied a hymn for her lover.

As I was coming on board this morning, and reading Mr Serle's hymn you wrote out for me, a sudden gust of wind blew it into the sea. I made the boatmen immediately heave to, and recovered it.

To Lydia's sister Henry wrote:

The consequence of my Marazion journey is, that I am enveloped in gloom. May He give me grace to turn cheerfully to my proper work and business. . . . Another consequence of my journey is, that I love Lydia more than ever.

There were yet one or two more meetings, and at the last a hurried parting, when as he sat reading to his lady and her mother a servant came in with news that the fleet had immediate sailing orders and a horse was at the door that he might catch his ship.

His Lydia in her hurried farewell 'made no objection whatever to coming out.' But 'you had better go out free,' she stipulated, implying, he thought, that the freedom need not be for ever. He mounted and galloped away, reaching Falmouth by the aid of relays of horses just as his ship was getting under way.

Next morning being Sunday, he held a service on the deck. As he read the words, 'But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly,' St Michael's Mount and St Hilary spire and trees were fast fading from sight. His letter to Lydia's sister still showed a lover's interest in those receding hills.

Lydia I knew was about that time at St Hilary. If you have heard from Marazion since Sunday I should be curious to know whether the fleet was observed passing. . . . Do not forget to tell me as much as you can about Lydia.

The fleet was so long held up in the Cove of Cork that Martyn had her answer there. The letter is not preserved. But it told him more of Lydia than she herself had let him know, for it explained that his lady who had said him neither yea nor nay, was still held back by some insuperable obstacle. From later letters it would seem that the obstacle was a double one. Her own obstinate scruple against a second engagement before her former lover's marriage (and the exasperating person delayed his wedding until 1810) was added to the difficulty of obtaining Mrs Grenfell's consent to her faring forth to the terribly remote East Indies to marry a man as 'methodistical' as herself and (who can gainsay the motherly prudence?) showing signs already to observant eyes of the tubercular tendency now making itself seen in both his sisters.

Henry Martyn was ill-prepared for the letter. Lydia's hesitating farewell speech had left him sanguine. But he was loyal to his lady, though his reply to Cousin Emma breathed more serenity than he could always feel.

Whatever others have said, I think that Lydia acts no more than consistently by persevering in her present determination. I confess, therefore, that till this obstacle is removed my path is perfectly clear. . . . The Lord teaches me to desire Christ for my all in all . . . surely the soul is happy that thus breathes in a medium of love?

CHAPTER VII

THE NINE MONTHS AT SEA

THAT summer of 1805 the beacons were in train on all the south coast heights, to give warning in case the French fleet sailed out of Brest for the invasion of England. Sir Home Popham, the Commodore who was to convoy the East India fleet, was held up in Cork Harbour in case his ships were needed to do battle against invaders, and every man in the convoy was given his battle station—Martyn's to be 'with the surgeons in the cockpit.'

It was 28th August before the convoy stood out to sea, a great fleet of one hundred and fifty sail. All the summer sailing of both East and West Indiamen were there with their burden of trade and with the new officials and cadets of the East India Company; and with the merchant vessels passing 'on their lawful occasions' was a fleet of fifty transports carrying five thousand troops under Sir John Baird, to some unknown destination. 'We are to join in some expedition,' Martyn told the Plymouth cousins, 'probably the Cape of Good Hope or the Brazils.' Neither the transports nor the merchantmen were quite defenceless. They all carried a few guns on the chance of a scrap on the high seas with an enemy privateer.

In spiritual charge of this assemblage of sea-dogs and fighting men ranging from raw village lads to blasphemous veterans, was Henry Martyn, aged twenty-four, at home in polite literature and in college courts, all delicate ear and sensitive scruple. Never were flock and shepherd more strangely assorted. He sailed on the *Union*, a transport carrying a load of treasure and his Majesty's 59th together with some of the East India Company's cadets and their officers. His cabin was stacked with books—

commentaries, oriental grammars, works on India and the life of David Brainerd for himself, together with Simeon's parting gift of an enormous Bible, and for the men a store of Scriptures, hymn-books and tracts.

The Commodore gave Madeira as the first rendezvous of the fleet, and between leaving Cork Harbour on 28th August and reaching Funchal on 29th September Martyn had an epitome of life at sea. Packed with humanity as the little wooden vessel was, she yet meant for Martyn a discipline of loneliness, always one of the marks of his spirit, but now first accentuated. For at Cambridge, although in the society of his own college he moved solitary as regards his deepest interests, there was in reserve the delightful intimacy of Sargent and Corrie and Simeon and half a dozen more, to atone for the disdain of the crowd. On the *Union* he felt himself not only friendless but a foreigner, a 'raw academic' as he called himself, out of place among men whose dinner talk was all of 'regiments and firemen.'

It was impossible that a Henry Martyn should not suffer in the first months after leaving England, as he believed, for ever. He was as homesick as a child, waking 'from disturbed dreams, to find myself with a long sea rolling between myself and all that I hold dear in this life.' 'England had gone, and with it all my peace . . . the pains of memory were all I felt.' For Lydia had not given him permission to write.

Unable to endure the fetid atmosphere below,¹ Martyn spent the first days of the voyage on deck 'standing in the air in a sort of patient stupidity, very sick and cold,' longing for the relief of being alone, but surrounded by a crowd, 'the soldiers jeering one another and swearing, the drums and fifes constantly playing.' The struggle that was darkening his days was in its essence spiritual.

¹ The air below decks became too foul even for those unsqueamish days, and at intervals one or other of the lower decks was cleared of humans and fires were lighted to purify the atmosphere.

He was torn by conflicting desires. 'The world in a peculiar form' (he might have said in a gracious feminine form) 'has a hold upon my soul, and the spiritual conflict is consequently dreadful. . . . I am now in the fire fighting hard.'

He wrote in his journal:

Beginning to grow quite outrageous with myself and like a wild bull in a net, I saw plainly this was coming to nothing, and so in utter despair of working any deliverance for myself, I simply cast myself upon Jesus Christ, praying that if it were possible, something of a change might be wrought in my heart.

Relief came to him, but not the relief of a traveller who regains the sheltered pastures where 'love is of the valley.' 'I gave you up entirely,' he told Lydia afterwards. The relief that came to Martyn was rather the relief of the traveller who has climbed through clouds to some upland meadow where gentians drink the sunlight of a peak. This evangelical parson on a troopship in Trafalgar year suddenly carries us into the company of all the mystics when they try to tell us of what came to them as they passed through purging pains to the soul's illumination.

At last the Lord hath appeared for the comfort of His creature [he says]. In prayer launched sweetly into eternity. . . . Thy work may be prosecuted best by my soul's remaining in heaven. The transcendent sweetness of the privilege of being always with God would appear to me too great, were it not for the blessed command 'Set your affections on things above.'

Or again:

Separated from my friends and country for ever, there is nothing to distract me from hearing 'the voice of my Beloved,' and coming away from the world and walking with Him in love, amid the flowers that perfume the air of Paradise.

Looking back in the light of such experience on the struggle he had just passed through, he felt that God had been also in the cloud, and the words of a sermon preached

on the poop of the *Union* convey his confidence. 'It may be you will still be kept in darkness, but darkness is not always the frown of God; it is only Himself—thy shade on thy right hand.'

The *Union* was the heaviest sailer in the fleet and she dropped out of sight of the rest of the convoy so that she ran considerable risk of capture. Only in port could the other ships share in the chaplain's ministrations, when they sent for him or came in boats with babes to be baptized. At sea the *Union* was his whole parish and earned the title of 'a very praying ship.'

Martyn's own mess was with the officers of the 59th and East India Company's cadets and writers in the cuddy, 'pleasant and orderly,' but he sought his flock in every corner of their crowded little world. 'I have now free access to the soldiers and sailors,' he wrote home. 'Went below decks,' he says, 'there was a quarrel amongst the soldiers and sailors; one of the former who was stripped for fighting I went up to.' And the tumult ceased, perhaps from sheer surprise, for it was far from usual in 1805 to meet a padre on the orlop deck. This chaplain was everywhere. They found him sitting among pig-tailed sailors on the gun-deck, where the hammocks of the crew were slung, or 'in the boatswain's berth' oblivious to everything in 'a long and close conversation with the carpenter.'

The most astonishing conquest that he made on the gun-deck was when the chief mate for his sake ceased to swear, and ranged himself beside Martyn as protector and stout friend, telling those who rebelled at the chaplain's ministrations that one day 'their consciences would be overhauled.'

Below the gun-deck were the soldiers; and amidships, just under the main hatchway, their wives, one of whom had come aboard as a stowaway at Portsmouth and remained unnoticed in the crowded confusion sharing a single ration with her husband until they reached

Madeira, when the Captain found her, forgave her handsomely, and put her on the ration list. Martyn went below every afternoon and amid 'the noise of the children, of the married people and the sailors who were all about us, talking as if nothing were going forward,' he read aloud to a small group from the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Later, he hit upon the more popular plan of teaching them to sing. His offer to teach the men to read they would have none of. The subalterns of the 59th chose to regard his singing class as 'most dangerous,' 'unfitting the men to be soldiers.' The senior officers, however, saw no harm in Martyn's unusual course if it gave him any pleasure; his audience was not so large as to cause any serious fear of the demoralization of the army. For Martyn had neither Sargent's humour, nor Simeon's arresting vehemence, nor any of the gifts of the street preacher.

It was never easy to him to thread his way through a crowd in the dark and stifling lower decks, and win for himself a hearing from the figures lolling round or busy with domestic concerns. With intense pain he would rouse himself to rebuke some blasphemy, knowing well that such a rebuke was no ingratiating opening for his message. Against humanity in the raw, humanity familiar with salt pork and curses, grog and cutlasses and bumboat women, he felt himself 'a schoolboy, a raw academic.'

'I pictured myself strutting about the streets and walks of Cambridge wrapt in content, thinking myself very amiable and admired.' He longed to escape from 'the academic contagion.' 'I could have willingly forgotten all I had ever read or learnt, to be a man of the ancient primitive simplicity.'

Martyn never found, and never would find his way to the warm heart of a mob. But his presence in the ship, with his refusal of all compromise, proved there, as wherever the clear flame of his spirit passed, a touchstone for other souls. Many of doubtful mind 'offended at his sayings' 'went back and walked no more with

him.' Yet here and there 'with tears' a rough and hearty seaman or corporal changed his allegiance and began to follow Christ on no easy path. The loyal few, for whom Martyn's cabin was open at all hours, were led on to harder loyalties than they had known before. One of the cadets' officers, a Mr Mackenzie, became almost Martyn's shadow, even going below decks to Martyn's hymn-singing, running the gauntlet of much banter in the cuddy afterwards. On his appearance a cheerful subaltern would sing out, 'Come now, let's have a little of the humbug,' and the cuddy would be indulged with a choice nasal parody of psalm-singing. The cadets whom Mr Mackenzie commanded were seriously afraid that their officer in turning 'Methodist' would try to make them all 'melancholy mad.'

The one service on Sunday was held on the poop, weather permitting, at any hour that seemed good to the authorities. Sometimes Martyn, expecting a service in the morning, would go up to find 'the sailors all at work on the poop and the boatswain swearing at them' and Church would not be rigged till 5 p.m. Sometimes it was put off till too late—"The sun was down before they rigged the Church"—and the men were piped to hammocks.

Between two and three hundred came to the services but the soldiers were 'not very attentive' to the chaplain's preaching. The boatswain's mate told him, to his deep humiliation, that the sermons were too difficult for the young lads among the soldiers.

His preaching was far too direct and unequivocal to be popular among the officers. 'Major Davidson told me that I set the duties of religion in so terrific a light that people were revolted. I felt the force of this remark and determined to make more use of the love of God in the gospel.' But his audience, used to the comfortable flowing periods of a moral essay, threatened to stay away unless his sermons changed. It was as though an Old Testament

prophet stood among them on the poop and delivered his burning message of 'righteousness, temperance and judgment to come,' clad all the while in the black gown and white bands associated with plump velvet pulpit-cushions and afternoon slumber.

The officers were annoyed and rude at the chaplain's failure, his deliberate failure too, to accommodate his preaching to their wishes. They arranged themselves behind him, ready to walk out at any statement of which they disapproved, and one of them conspicuously 'employed himself in feeding the geese.'

There are pleasanter pictures of Martyn with his flock, as when he stole unobserved down three ladders to visit the sick in the cockpit, where he had to feel his way to their hammocks, a light being forbidden. 'At night,' he writes, 'got below without being observed, and with some Madeira and water for two of the sick men.'

Or as when a corporal stole up to him and pressed into his hand a letter with the confession of spiritual need that he could never make otherwise on the crowded deck, and Martyn sought him out and spent a Sunday evening by his side at the main hatchway 'looking out at a raging sea.'

The first break in the monotony of sea life was at Funchal, Madeira, where the fleet put in for water, upsetting the whole economy of the island by the demands of its great numbers. Martyn had letters of introduction to the English community and characteristically enough persuaded one of his island acquaintance to come to his lodging to hear him read aloud the whole of a volume of French sermons in order to criticize his pronunciation 'with great care and attention.'

When the fleet had sailed the men learned that San Salvador (now Bahia) Brazil, was the next rendezvous on their tortuous passage to India, but the troops were still in the dark as to where they were to take the field.

The month of October (3rd October to 12th November) they spent in crossing the Atlantic, all unaware that

during their voyage the French fleet had sailed out of Cadiz to meet the English under Cape Trafalgar. During this month Martyn made strides with Hindustani in which he was to do original and originaive work. He had with him Gilchrist's *Grammar* and *Dictionary* and was making himself master of all the roots. Men of the type of Sir William Jones built their work upon dictionaries and comparison of written roots; Martyn, as much in love as they with such research, had a message for life, and the living language must also be his care. The officers of the *Union* saw their most astonishing chaplain sit down among the Lascars and test on them the sentences from his grammar. He found, as might be expected, that the Hindustani of the grammars was 'vastly too fine for these men' and too full of Arabic and Persian words. Slowly he made himself better understood: the *Journal* for Trafalgar Day shows Martyn seated on the gun deck, the centre of a group of Lascars, and reading aloud

the prayer of Parboter which I had been translating into Hindoostanee. They seemed to understand me perfectly.

Later he bore one of them off to his cabin to test his work sentence by sentence and word by word. A Company's official who invited 'blacks' to his cabin must be demented, and the officers henceforth gave Martyn up as 'a mad enthusiast.'

They ran at last into San Salvador after a day spent in battle stations owing to the presence of a strange sail on the horizon. Here Martyn went ashore on a new continent and spent one of the sunniest fortnights of his life. 'Nothing but negro slaves' was his first impression, 'very good-natured cheerful looking people.'

A slave was sent to gather three roses for me. . . . A slave in my bedroom washed my feet. I was struck with the degree of abasement expressed in the act; and as he held the foot in the towel with his head bowed down towards it, I remembered the condescension of our blessed Lord.

Looking for a shady spot where he could be alone under the orange trees, Martyn stumbled on to the estate of a Portuguese gentleman, who, charmed with the manners and the learning of the stranger, gave him great and genial hospitality; carried him about through the sunny air in a palanquin, and showed him off to his friends as 'one who knew everything, Persian, Arabic, Greek.' Martyn half amused and wholly interested in his new experiences in the pleasant, lazy land was allowed at intervals the solace of time alone in the garden where trees made a shade near water, the ground covered with oranges, like apples on an English orchard floor. Here, in great peace, he crooned over well-loved hymns, read psalms that carried him to Lydia and Cornwall, and prayed aloud in the security that no Brazilian listener could understand his words.

In the delights of the tropical garden; in genial hours when Señor Antonio, his wife and a slave played cards, and Martyn 'sat at the table learning Hindoostanee roots'; in a rapid devouring of the Portuguese grammar; and in Latin discussions, not unheated, with the Franciscan fathers of the place, the pleasant Brazilian interlude flew by; and Martyn was rowed back to the crowded life on board, by white-robed Lascars singing chants in honour of Muhammad.

The fleet stood out to sea and now at last the object of the military expedition was disclosed.

December 6th. Our Captain going aboard the Commodore by a signal, brought back the information that the Cape was our object, that a stout resistance was expected; and that it would be five weeks before we should arrive thither. The minds of all were set in motion by this account, as few, I believe, expected hard fighting.

The 'side show' for which this expedition had been despatched was the wresting from the French (then masters of the 'Batavian Republic') of the Dutch settle-

ment of Cape Colony, which, in view of Napoleon's eastward-straining ambition, loomed large as a naval stronghold that was the halfway house to India.

So through strange seas and under other stars than the stars of home, the *Union* carried her load of fighting men to battle. In this, the third stage of her voyage, many of the men went sick. Martyn staggered amongst them, himself down with dysentery. His journal reveals something of the miseries of illness at sea in 1805.

The ship's steward lay convulsed with a gunner standing by him, holding a burning lamp that would scarcely burn; the air was so bad and the place withal so hot, being directly under the copper, that it was altogether most intolerable.

Had no service below as I was taken up in going to and fro to the sick, of whom there is now a great number. . . . The condition of the sick is miserable. I could not stand it till I got some aromatic vinegar.

The Captain himself was stricken down.

About seven this morning I was sent for by the surgeon to the captain; I saw that he was a dying man. I began to read the most encouraging passages I could find. . . . He repeated 'Lord, evermore give us this bread' . . . I prayed. . . . On my being interrupted by the doctor, he said 'Mind him,' meaning that he was to attend to me, and shortly died.

When 1806 was three days old, the high lands of the Cape were discovered, yet eighty miles off; seen now with what eager suspense by cadets who for the first time would go into battle. Martyn's journal and a letter to Sargent give us a picture of the deck of the *Union* when she came to anchor in Table Bay on Saturday night, 4th January.

About sunset the fleet came to an anchor between Robbers' Island and the land. The instant our anchor was down, a signal was given for the 59th regiment to prepare to land. Our men were soon ready and received thirty-six rounds of ball cartridge; before the three boats were lowered down and fitted it was two o'clock; I stayed up to see them off. The

privates were keeping up their spirits by affecting to joke about the approach of danger, and the ladies sitting in the cold night upon the grating of the after-hatchway overwhelmed with grief.

Martyn, although an official chaplain of the East India Company's troops, was left on deck with the women. He heard the artillery speak and 'it seemed as if the mountain itself were torn by intestine convulsions.' He could see his men rush down the hill to meet the Dutch, and then, as the enemy who had stood fire were broken by a bayonet charge, Martyn escaped from the *Union* and got ashore to his men. On the sandy beach he came first upon the cadets of his own ship who had made a shelter of bushes and straw and hailed him in to eat with them. But he did not stay long, for two wounded Highlanders walking into the lines brought news of a number of wounded lying out along the army's line of march. A party with 'slings and barrows' went in search and Martyn was off with them six miles through the soft burning sand dotted with heath and geranium.

We were attracted by seeing some English soldiers; wounded men of the 24th; three were mortally wounded. One who was shot through the lungs was spitting blood. The surgeon desired me to spread a greatcoat over him as they left him. As I did this I talked to him a little of the blessed Gospel.

The wounded were being carried into a Boer farmhouse.

All whom we approached cried out instantly for water. One poor Hottentot . . . lay with extraordinary patience under his wound on the burning sand; I did what I could to make his position comfortable, and laid near him some bread which I found on the ground.

Cape Town surrendered on 10th January. About five the Commodore fired a gun which was answered by the other men-of-war. 'On looking out for the cause, we saw the British flag flying on the Dutch fort. . . . I prayed

that the capture of the Cape might be for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.'

The fleet lingered nearly a month at the Cape and Martyn took shore lodgings, rejoiced in 'honest English apples and pears, tea and bread and butter for breakfast,' and came into personal contact with one of his Cambridge heroes, Dr Vanderkemp, the old Dutch missionary to Kaffraria whose report he had found so 'infinitely entertaining' that he 'could read nothing else while it lasted.'

From the exuberance of Martyn's delight at meeting men who shared the same allegiance, we gather how great had been the repression and loneliness of the months at sea. 'I was beyond measure delighted.' 'I hardly knew what to do.' He visited them daily.

Walking home I asked Dr Vanderkemp if he had ever repented of his undertaking. 'No,' said the old man, smiling, 'and I would not exchange my work for a kingdom.' Dear Dr Vanderkemp gave me a Syriac Testament as a remembrance of him.

So passed a month and the East India fleet was once more ready to sail. Before leaving Africa Martyn went with two or three friends up Table Mountain; and wandering away from his party he scrambled up the kloof alone. At the end of the last steep pull he came upon a little hollow, green and decked with flame-coloured blossoms waving in the breeze. 'It seemed to be an emblem of the beauty and peacefulness of heaven as it shall open upon the soul.' He left the kloof and stood alone on the roof of the world, looking from sea to sea, 'where there was neither noise nor smaller objects to draw off my attention. One might be said to look round the world from this promontory.' Gazing out eastward over the watery road to India, the calmness of wide spaces came into his soul. 'I felt commanded to wait in silence and see how God would bring His promises to pass.'

None of the travellers found it easy to go back to the

close-packed life of their voyagings: 'A gloom seemed to hang upon all the passengers, at beginning so long a trip as from hence to India, after the weariness of so long a voyage.' They set sail on 9th February, 1806, shortly before Martyn's twenty-fifth birthday, and seven months after leaving England, and they plunged at once into storms and sea-sickness. Martyn propped up in his cabin a water-colour of St Hilary Vicarage, and longed for a picture of Lydia. But there was a quietness dwelling on his spirit:

I pray that this may be my state, neither to be anxious to escape from this stormy sea that was round the Cape, nor to change the tedious scene of the ship for Madras . . . but to glorify God where I am and where He puts me.

A change was coming over his experience. During the first months of his voyage, along with the acceptance of loneliness and rebuff there had come to him moments of illumination and escape, which he could only describe as 'walking with my Beloved amid the flowers of Paradise.'

Now as he left South Africa his climbing soul made fresh discovery. Such moments of ecstasy, like sunlit peaks, were not the summit he was seeking, but only outlying bulwarks of 'those shining tablelands.'

'I perceived for the first time the difference between sensible sweetness in religion, and the really valuable attainments.' He dwelt first with surprise, but later with consent, on a stern sentence of Leighton. 'Mortify all affections towards inward sensible spiritual delight in grace, and the following of devotion with sensible sweetness in the lower faculties or powers of the soul, which are in no wise real sanctity or holiness in themselves, but certain gifts of God to help our infirmity.' Strong meat for strong climbers this, and no milk for babes.

The last stage of the *Union's* voyage was the weariest. The ship was several times becalmed in the Indian Ocean and people grew fretful in the heat and tedious delay. It is curious to see the moral ascendancy which

Martyn had insensibly won over the men he sailed with. There was little peace for his Hindustani grammar, he was 'much teased with the accusations of the Captain, the commander of the troops, the sick, etc., all of whom complain of and abuse one another to me.' As the delays lengthened, the new Captain confided in Martyn his fears that the provisions might not hold out. Sickness continued among the men and there was no diet fit for invalids. Martyn sent down to them his own allowance of Madeira and water. Coffee gave out, then tea. There was no fresh meat to spare and Martyn's own helping went, when he could manage it, to the convalescents, while he ate salt junk himself.

Martyn was himself a sick man with constant headache, dysentery and 'a distressing sensation of shortness of breath,' contending too against 'nervous irritability.'

In general I find, that, in beginning to pray, I transport myself in imagination to some solitary spot . . . and there fancy myself praying. The bad consequence of this is that when I open my eyes and am conversant with the things around me, I am distressed and unable to maintain such a sense of God's presence; imagination seems to be a sort of help like music. . . . Yet I feel that I ought to learn to live without it.

After two months at sea Martyn, coming on deck early from his sleepless cabin, 'saw the island of Ceylon bearing west three or four leagues. . . . The smell from the land was exceedingly fragrant.' All spirits rose and on 25th April at sunlight the *Union* anchored in the Madras roads. A round of invitations waited for Martyn, a kindly welcome from the chaplain, and pleasant words of approval from the Governor, Lord William Bentinck, before whom he preached. But already his heart was given to the east. 'While the turbaned Asiatics waited upon us at dinner I could not help feeling as if we had got into their places;' he was perhaps the first Englishman in India to think just that thought.

CHAPTER VIII

CALCUTTA, 1806

AS the *Union* slowly made sail up the Hooghly, her sea-worn passengers feasting their eyes on the low tranquil shore, she was met by the *Charlotte* yacht out of Calcutta, sent by the Company to relieve her of her load of Government treasure. Martyn went aboard the yacht, hoping that the smaller boat would make Calcutta faster. That evening they lay in Garden Reach, 'very beautiful' in the sunset light.

To a Calcutta under Sir George Barlow's rule, and in the inevitable tide of reaction that followed the withdrawal of Wellesley's imperious hand, Martyn went ashore at daylight on 16th May, 1806, and asked for the senior chaplain David Brown. He was fifteen miles away at his suburban home, Aldeen. His colleague Buchanan had sailed out of the Hooghly as Martyn entered it, and so it came about that the first man to welcome Martyn to Bengal was William Carey, Baptist missionary and oriental scholar. With him, so different in upbringing, so like in gifts and apostolic spirit, Martyn sat down to his first breakfast without 'the smell of the ship.' Carey bald-headed, unassuming, almost uncouth in manner, had no small talk, but he never failed to take fire, like Martyn himself, if the talk turned to missions.

With him I breakfasted, and joined with him in worship, which was in Bengalee, for the advantage of a few servants, who sat however perfectly unmoved. I could not help contrasting them with the slaves and Hottentots at Cape Town whose hearts seemed to burn within them. After breakfast Carey began to translate with a Pundit from a Sanskrit manuscript.

A chit from Mr Brown during the morning put his Calcutta house at Martyn's disposal—the chaplain's rooms adjoining St John's Church. There in the heart of the city, where the moving shadow of the spire still marks the glaring hours, Martyn retired for solitude and prayer. There too on that first day he was hunted out by 'Mr Brown's moonshi, a Brahmin' who 'came in and disputed with me two hours about the Gospel.' The solitude of that beginning, broken only by the arguments of the learned visitor, are a strange foreshadowing of what was to come.

Mr Brown soon came to Calcutta and bore Martyn out to his home at Aldeen, buried in foliage of mango, teak and bamboo, with green lawns (since broken up into tanks for the Howrah Water Works) that sloped down to the river and made a playground for his flock of children. Here at the large family table where, whoever might come, motherly Mrs Brown always made room for one guest more, Martyn found his Indian home. It was pure joy after work to romp with children. A friend¹ tells us that 'when he relaxed from his labours in the presence of friends it was to play and laugh like an innocent, happy child, more especially if children were present to play and laugh with him.' Into that grave journal of his there creeps a line that tells much, when he writes of returning to Aldeen with 'children jumping and shouting and convoying me in troops to the house.'

Martyn began at once to preach for David Brown at the Old Mission Church, and his Calcutta friends did their best to keep him there, carrying their appeals 'farther than mere civility.' Congenial as his new friends were, the thought of staying in Calcutta chafed his spirit. He knew that three of the six chaplains for the Company's fifty-three stations in Bengal were planted there, together with the group of Baptist missionaries under Carey's leadership at Serampore. He felt, also,

¹ Mrs Sherwood.

that Calcutta was a foreign merchant settlement upon the mudheaps. He set his heart, therefore, on a chaplaincy at one of the great inland centres of Indian population.

I almost think that to be prevented going among the heathen as a missionary would break my heart. Whether it be self-will or aught else, I cannot yet rightly ascertain. . . . I feel pressed in spirit to do something for God. . . . I have hitherto lived to little purpose more like a clod than a servant of God; now let me burn out for God.

Amid the want of activity and decision so remarkable among the friends of religion here I must begin at last to act for myself, though I am no more qualified than a child. At present this is the state of things, I wish to fix at Benares. . . . If not I must endeavour to have an audience of the Governor-General'

His home while he waited for the decision about his station was in a pagoda in David Brown's Aldeen garden, overhanging the broad river. It was a forsaken temple, a weird place of vaulted cells, its bricks carven with many-armed figures of Hindu gods. This eerie home of crumbling masonry and creeping vegetation now became Martyn's cell.

My habitation, assigned me by Mr Brown, is a pagoda in his grounds, on the edge of the river. Thither I retired at night, and really felt something like superstitious dread, at being in a place once inhabited as it were by devils, but yet felt disposed to be triumphantly joyful, that the temple where they were worshipped was become Christ's oratory. I prayed out aloud to my God, and the echoes returned from the vaulted roof. . . . I like my dwelling much, it is so retired and free from noise; it has so many recesses and cells that I can hardly find my way in and out.

Here on a platform built over the placid lapping river, Henry Martyn wrote his sermons for Calcutta congregations and almost grudged the time they cost. For the English of Calcutta had David Brown to their shepherd,

and he was constrained to press on to the unshepherded. Here too he flung himself greedily on Bengali and Persian and Hindustani, with a Brahmin and a Muslim teacher with whom he would sit for hours as they introduced him for the first time to long winding oriental arguments upon religion, interminable as the flow of the river under his pagoda. In Hindustani especially he had made gigantic strides, and could now point out to his teacher mistakes in a translation of Genesis. Sometimes he took boat down to the College of Fort William for lessons in oriental penmanship, learning Hindustani roots in the boat as he went, and returning perhaps in the evening with a crowd of the Aldeen children in the boat, singing across the sunset water.

Five minutes' walk along the river bank brought him to the apostolic settlement of Carey, Marshman and Ward, the immortal trio of Serampore missionaries. Martyn entered keenly into all the joys and sorrows of this Serampore community: the tragic night when they were all agog to welcome Mr Chamberlain and his wife, only to find that Mrs Chamberlain had died on the boat: the Greek Testament lectures to younger missionaries: the preachings to wayside groups under banyan trees, or to immense crowds at fair-time: or the night (when Martyn could not sleep for indignation) of the news that Sir George Barlow, not content with the ban on missionaries in British territory, had forbidden the captain of an American vessel to land two who were bound for Serampore under the protection of the King of Denmark.

A yet dearer friend came to the pagoda, a junior of Cambridge days, Daniel Corrie, afterwards Bishop of Madras. That plain-faced, genial person, adoring children and adored by them, fighting down the claims of rare social popularity had recorded his desire to 'become the world's fool for the sake of Christ'; and inspired by Simeon, but still more by Martyn, now followed his friend to an Indian chaplaincy. As he lay in the Hooghly

a note came to him to say that Martyn was awaiting him at the College of Fort William.

'I set off immediately,' says Corrie, 'and was received by him with the most lively demonstrations of joy.' Martyn as guide to Calcutta took the newcomer for a drive on the dusty 'Course' that evening, 'as if I meant to exhibit my reinforcement.'

Corrie found Martyn eating his heart out at delay in Calcutta. The sights around him were burning themselves into his spirit, as not unsimilar sights had stirred the spirit of St Paul.

Before the stumps of images, for they were not better, some of the people prostrated themselves, striking the ground twice with their foreheads. This excited more horror in me than I can well express. . . . I thought that if I had words I would preach to the multitudes all day if I lost my life for it.

So Martyn waited in Calcutta, constrained in spirit, reading the life of St Francis Xavier, 'exceedingly roused at the astonishing example of that great man,' and raising in the city just such a storm as he had excited on the *Union* by his uncompromising sermons. At the Old Mission Church his earnestness was deeply acceptable, but St John's was a scene of trial. It still stands much as Martyn saw it, in the heart of Calcutta with Zoffany's queer altarpiece of the Last Supper, drawn with all the faces taken from old Calcutta characters. Those Sunday morning services at which Martyn sometimes preached before Sir George Barlow and his staff were all but government functions. Here, before all the great ones of that little world, the new chapla'n stood up to proclaim the gospel.

I knew what I was to be on my guard against—and therefore, that I might not have my mind full of idle thoughts about the opinions of men, I prayed both before and after, that the word might be for the conversion of souls, and that I might feel indifferent except on this score. The sermon excited no small ferment; however, after some looks of surprise

and whispering, the congregation became attentive and serious.

Martyn's summons came at last to an up-country station, and on 14th September, 1806, he wrote to Sargent, 'I am this day appointed to Dinapore in the neighbourhood of Patna.'

Patna was in those days some six weeks from Calcutta, travelling by a leisurely house-boat towed against the stream. The Browns, and indeed the whole friendly Calcutta group who had hoped to keep Martyn amongst them, quailed at the thought of sending him out alone. He had already shown them his helplessness in sickness, when it was his way to stagger on where a wiser man would have yielded.

July 12th, 1806. Found Europe letters. . . . My letters were from Lydia, T. H. and Emma, Mr Simeon and Sargent. All their first letters had been taken in the Bell Packet. I longed to see Lydia's. . . . The one I did receive from her was very animating. . . . Mr Simeon's letter contained her praises, and even he seemed to regret that I had gone without her.

Oh, the pity of it! A letter from Lydia. She had sent him off to the ends of the earth with 'the half of a broken hope for pillow at night' and with no leave to correspond with her. Had she been wise she would have let ill alone. But Lydia, for all her real goodness, was not of the heroic build. She could not (as she thought) accept Henry's love; nor could she bear to let it go entirely out of her life, and a few months after Martyn's departure she began sending letters after him. A series of six she despatched, of which the first had been lost at sea. Sisterly or cousinly letters she would have called them, but they served to rouse in Martyn all his buried hopes. What lover would not have found it 'animating' to be told that his lady prayed for him many times every day? Was not his Lydia giving him now the answer that she was not ready to give in the moment of hurried parting? Martyn took

the letter to David Brown who certainly understood from it that the lady was to be won if she were not won already.

Mr Brown's arguments appear so strong that my mind is almost made up to send for Lydia.

So it came to pass that Martyn sat down in the pagoda to write his first love letter:

July 29th, 1806. Much of this morning taken up in writing to Lydia. . . . Staid up till midnight in finishing the letter to Lydia.

It was very long, as the letter would be of one hitherto pent up in silence and at last able to write his love. There was much to be said too, for this was a letter with a definite proposal that she should break through all her timidities and come to him. His pen flew on after the last boat had splashed homeward on the river and the night was broken only by the wash of water or the sudden cry of a bird.

I at last sit down to request you to come out to me in India. . . . With a safe conscience and the enjoyment of the divine presence I calmly and deliberately make the proposal to you. . . . If He shall forbid it, I think, that by His grace, I shall even then be contented. . . . It can be nothing but a sacrifice on your part.

There follow assurances about the voyage and the climate, so dreadful and so unknown to the Cornish friends; his salary will keep her in comfort, and there will be English ladies at hand. Can she be ready to sail in the February fleet? (The impatience of the lover made him over-sanguine about Jates. Lydia did not receive his letter until March.) She is to come out as 'guest to Mr Brown' in any ship where there is a lady of high rank in the service to chaperon her. And will she take Gilchrist's *Indian Strangers' Guide*¹ on the voyage? (a work in

¹ *The Strangers' East Indian Guide to the Hindoostanee or Grand Popular Language of India (improperly called Moors)*, by J. Gilchrist.

which she could learn to read in romanized character such Hindustani sentences as 'Hand me the tooth-brush and powder,' 'I want a palanquin and bearers.')

Then, as it drew on to midnight and the long letter must come to a close, the lover in the ghostly pagoda allowed himself to speak.

You say in your letter that *frequently every day* you remember my worthless name before the throne of grace. This instance of extraordinary and undeserved kindness draws my heart towards you with a tenderness which I cannot describe. Dearest Lydia, in the sweet and fond expectation of your being given to me by God, and of the happiness which I humbly hope you yourself might enjoy here, I find a pleasure in breathing out my assurance of ardent love.

To his vivid imagination his Lydia was almost there. 'As soon as she arrives in the river,' he wrote to Simeon, 'Mrs Brown (a most sensible and zealous woman) will go down fifty or sixty miles to bring her up, so that she will not have the least trouble.'

Her letters meanwhile only buoyed up his hopes. 'My dearest Lydia's assurances of her love are grateful to my heart.' But she was yet in Cornwall, and the immediate business was to send Henry Martyn off alone to his new station.

The Aldeen family and the Serampore missionaries came to the pagoda for a farewell meeting. At that moment the strange interaction of body, mind and spirit were producing in him something more like exultation. Warmth and sunshine had for the moment stayed or seemed to stay the tendency to disease. Hope had flooded the heart of the lover. And the disciple saw before him at the last the longed-for task allotted to him by his Master's hand. So, while they sang and prayed under the echoing vault, he was exultant: 'My soul never before had such divine enjoyment . . . my joy was too great for my body. I was in actual pain. . . . How sweet to walk with Jesus—to love Him and to die for Him.'

CHAPTER IX

DINAPORE

FOUR of the Calcutta friends brought Martyn on his way up the river, till bad weather turned them back, and he was left for six weeks of leisurely travel alone with his Muslim language teacher and his company of servants and boatmen. All day they towed the boat up-stream and at sunset made her fast and lighted cooking fires on the bank.

Through the sunny hours when the servants liked to roll themselves in cotton sheets and sleep on the roof of the house-boat, Martyn sat at his books, sometimes with his teacher at Hindustani and Bengali, sometimes alone at Sanskrit.

Tell Marshman with my affectionate remembrances that I have seriously begun the Sanscrit grammar, but I cannot say whereabouts I am in it, being enveloped at present in a thick cloud with the exceptions, limitations, anomalies, etc.

Hindustani he was making more and more his own. He brought to the language already some knowledge of Persian and Arabic from which on the one side it traced descent, and he was now adding Sanskrit, its parent on the other side, and so fitting himself for a critical mastery of its form and vocabulary.

He brought also the delicate ear that was quick to detect changes of dialect as he passed from village to village on the Hooghly and the Ganges. So the river days glided by. 'Reading hard all day.' 'Employed all the day in translating, in which work the time passes away pleasantly and rapidly. The cold mornings and evenings begin to be very severe.'

At sunset when the gaily-painted 'budgerow' was moored, the boatmen in little circles round their supper fires smoked coco-nut hookahs or told interminable tales. And Martyn went ashore for exercise; sometimes with his gun, bringing home snipe or minas 'enough to make a change with the curry'; sometimes with New Testaments or some of the leaflets printed at Serampore. He would plunge into villages where no 'sahib' had been seen before, scaring away graceful companies of women as they came up from the river with dripping saris, the household waterpots balanced against their flanks.

He talked with all and sundry, testing his Hindustani wherever he could find a friendly soul ready to chat with him:

All ran away when they saw me, except one poor old woman who was ill, and begged. Though she spoke clearly enough, I could scarcely understand one of her words, so that I have quite a new language to learn. When she received half a rupee, she was mute with astonishment.

So gliding through the teeming land he came at last to Patna and its European suburbs of Dinapore (military) and Bankipore (civil), his new parish, the whole stretching for fourteen miles along the bank of the river which here is two miles wide.

By an early and all-but-forgotten statute of the East India Company it was the duty of their chaplains to teach the natives at their stations, and Henry Martyn, eager as he was for the task, 'was almost overwhelmed' at the sight of 'the immense multitudes' in this the second city of Bengal—'the multitudes at the waterside prodigious.'

He left the house-boat for barrack quarters and surveyed the work before him. 'I have now made my calls and delivered my letters, and the result of my observations upon whom and what I have seen is that I stand alone,' he wrote to the Aldeen friends. There was no church,

and Martyn was expected to conduct service at the drumhead, either in a barrack room with no seats or in one of the two squares of the cantonments, with no shade from the Indian sun.

The civilians at Bankipore had never had a service and were embarrassed when the new chaplain offered to come and give them one, more especially as the judge had married a Muslim wife, abandoned his faith and built a mosque to please her, which Martyn found on his first call decked out with flags and lanterns for a Muslim feast. But little desirous as his countrymen seemed to be of his services for themselves, they approved still less of his intercourse with the people of the great Indian city.

They seem to hate to see me associating at all with the natives, and one gave me a hint a few days ago about taking my exercise on foot. But if our Lord had always travelled about in His palanquin, the poor woman who was healed by touching the hem of His garment might have perished.

Our countrymen, when speaking of the natives, said as they usually do, that they cannot be converted, and if they could, they would be worse than they are.

Martyn annoyed the General 'by what I said about the natives.' In those days of preposterous superiority the chaplain dared to believe that 'these men are not all fools, and that all ingenuity and clearness of reasoning are not confined to England and Europe.'

Patna was in India the home of those formidable Puritans of Islam, the fanatical sect of Wahabis; it was a city full of growing rumour. Martyn was greeted with scowls.

The thought of interrupting a crowd of busy people like those at Patna, whose every day is a market day, with a message about eternity, without command of language sufficient to explain and defend myself, and so of becoming the scorn of the rabble without doing them good, was offensive to my pride. The manifest disaffection of the people, and the contempt with which they eyed me confirmed my dread.

Altogether his new parish presented no rosy prospect. But Martyn did not ask for roses. He found work to his hand in the hospital and the incessant funerals of a station where one regiment on arriving lost fifteen men in fourteen days. The sick men were sometimes ribald, but at other times Martyn 'was much comforted to hear that the men had great love for him.' His barrack quarters, as the General had warned him, became untenable in the heat, and he thereupon moved to a bungalow in the smaller cantonment square, which seemed to him too sumptuous for a missionary, but which he for ever filled with a strange assortment of language teachers, scribes, and poverty-stricken guests.

Martyn, now master of a house, set aside the big central room and verandas for a church, retaining only the use of the smaller rooms. He had forms set out (though superior persons sent their servants before service with their own chairs and footstools), and a table behind which he stood. He begged from the General the help of the band to lead hymns and chants. The men were paraded, the station merchants drove up, the ladies were handed in from their palanquins by officers, the soldiers' wives in white dresses and mob caps came across the dusty square under painted umbrellas, and Martyn at his table, with the light filtering through the double green lattices behind him, saw before him a larger congregation and one in far greater need of instruction in the Christian faith than would have been his had he stayed at the Calcutta mission church.

But he was not content with a flock that came indeed to his service, but took no further notice of religion. At Dinapore, as everywhere, his presence was a touchstone; souls here and there accepted his standards and mounted his steep path. Martyn yearned over such and wrestled on their behalf. A Major and his wife who made a marked change of life had to face the music:

The Major was telling me yesterday, almost with tears, of the sneers he met with from nearly all for his religion. . . . He longs to be in England to follow religion unmolested. . . . I felt such love to him that I could have laid down my life for him.

It was no easier for the men. Martyn put his house at the disposal of the 'serious' soldiers twice a week, and never failed to meet the tiny group, for whom sometimes a fair linen cloth was spread and a Communion held in his veranda. They were not more than about half a dozen hardy souls who could gather at any one time.

Six soldiers came last night. To escape as much as possible the taunts of their wicked companions, they go out of their barracks in opposite directions to come to me.

For one part of Martyn's flock in the cantonments no pastoral care had ever yet been shown. With each European regiment of the East India Company there came a half-recognized following of Portuguese and Indian women of the camp. Military regulations forbade Martyn to give Christian marriage to these women and the soldiers. Yet many of the unions with them were lifelong and faithful. Since marriage was against the regulations it became one of the hardest tests for Martyn's 'serious' soldiers to give their women an allowance and cease to live with them. The camp women, nominally Roman Catholic or Muslim, but virtually ignorant of all faiths, had become an institution in cantonment life. For good or evil they were there and quite unshepherded and Martyn could not leave them without care.

I signified to the Colonel that I was ready to minister in the country language to the native women belonging to his soldiers of the European regiment, which he approved, but told me it was my business to find them an order and not his. So I issued my command to the sergeant-major to give public notice that there would be divine service in the native

language on the morrow. The morrow came and . . . 200 women. Instead of the lessons I began Matthew.

The women come, I fear, rather because it is the wish of their masters. The conversion of any of such despised people is never likely perhaps to be of any extensive use in regard to the natives at large; but they are a people, committed to me by God, and as dear to Him as others, and next in order after the English, they come within the expanding circle of action.

‘The expanding circle of action’—so in a single phrase he reveals his outlook.¹ His first step beyond the cantonments was the setting up of four little primary schools in Patna and its neighbourhood. The well-greased urchins squatted more or less contentedly, writing the Persian character in the sand or on wooden slates and singing out the name of the letter as they did so. ‘Thus they learn both to read and to write at the same time.’ For such scholars as mastered the art of reading Martyn prepared in Hindustani the Sermon on the Mount and a little book of the Parables of Christ with explanations, his own first effort at Hindustani composition, corrected again and again with loving and scrupulous care under the eye of his several teachers.

I went on to Patna to see how matters stood with respect to the school. Its situation is highly favourable, near an old gate now in the midst of the city, and where three ways meet. . . . The people immediately gathered round me in great numbers. I told them that what they understood by making people Christians was not my intention; I wished the children to be taught to fear God and to become good men.

Such little schools, together with the habit of welcoming Indian friends to their houses, earned for Martyn and his friend Corrie (now stationed above him at the rock fortress of Chunar overhanging the Ganges) the title of ‘the black chaplains.’

Martyn and Corrie wrote to one another once a week, sending up and down the river accounts of language

¹ See Chapter XV.

difficulties, refractory schoolmasters, children's progress, or quaint ecclesiastical adventures in neglected communities where all manner of questions crept in about baptism, marriage and Christian burial, that had to be solved on the spot by the isolated young chaplains, in a country where there was no bishop, and David Brown himself, whom Martyn's letters call 'the patriarch,' was only in deacon's orders.

Second only to Corrie's letters and occasional visits, as the joy of Martyn's life, was a budget that came periodically from Calcutta. Claudius Buchanan with the mind of an ecclesiastical strategist and Brown with the care of a father for his isolated juniors, started together a kind of clerical club for keeping in touch with such chaplains as cared to study the whole Christian position in India. Each man was to send a monthly report of his own task; and other documents of interest were circulated with these, such as Buchanan's researches on the ancient Syrian Churches in the South, or the Latin correspondence which Martyn set up with the Roman Catholic fathers of the Propaganda. The group planned together to supplement the work at Serampore in Bible translation, and collected books on oriental tongues. Martyn heard of the club—'The Associated Clergy' they called it—with enthusiasm.

What a gratification it would be to me to lean my head across your long table to hear what you and your colleagues are planning. But I hope you will send me constant intelligence. Your wish to hear from me can never equal my desire for your letters. The Lord love you and yours.

Sorely did he need these Indian friendships, for home letters were few and distressing. His sister Laura died of consumption, and Sally though happily married (so happily that she did not often write to Henry) was also in poor health. And at last the answer came from Lydia. It came to one who dreamed at night of her coming,

who after a day 'hard at Arabic Grammar' sat at his door looking across the dusty barrack square with his heart at St Hilary and Marazion, and who 'hastened on the alterations' in his comfortless house and garden to make it fit for her.

October 24th, 1807. An unhappy day; received at last a letter from Lydia, in which she refuses to come because her mother will not consent to it.

He began a letter to her at once:

My Dear Lydia—

Though my heart is bursting with grief and disappointment, I write not to blame you. . . . You condemn yourself for having given me, though unintentionally, encouragement to believe that my attachment was returned. Perhaps you have. I have read your former letters with feelings less sanguine since the receipt of the last, and am still not surprised at the interpretation I put upon them. . . .

You do not assign among your reasons for refusal a want of regard to me. . . . On the contrary you say that '*present* circumstances seem to you to forbid my indulging expectations.' . . . Let me say I must be contented to wait till you feel that the way is clear. . . . If there were no reason for your coming here, and the contest were only between Mrs Grenfell and me, that is between her happiness and mine, I would urge nothing further, but resign you to her. But I have considered that there are many things that might reconcile her to a separation from you (if indeed a separation is necessary, for if she would come along with you, I should rejoice the more). First she does not depend on you alone for the comfort of her declining years. She is surrounded by friends. She has a greater number of sons and daughters honourably established in the world than falls to the lot of most parents—all of whom would be happy in having her amongst them. Again, if a person worthy of your hand, and settled in England, were to offer himself, Mrs Grenfell would not have insuperable objections though it *did* deprive her of her daughter. . . .

But the more I write and the more I think of you, the more my affections warms, and I should feel it difficult to keep my

pen from expressions that might not be acceptable to you.

Farewell! dearest, most beloved Lydia, remember your faithful and ever affectionate

H. MARTYN.

To David Brown:

It is as I feared. She refuses to come because her mother will not give her consent. Sir, you must not wonder at my pale looks when I receive so many hard blows on my heart. . . . The queen's ware on its way out to me can be sold at an outcry or sent to Corrie. I do not want queen's ware or anything else now.

Was Mrs Grenfell then so obdurate a parent? Or was Lydia only half in love with the man and half with the romance of being loved by him? A niece of Lydia tells us that the maternal opposition was real. 'The connexion with the Martyns was distasteful' to Mrs Grenfell who did not feel the families equally matched. And she adds, 'I should say that my [great] aunt's ideas of paternal authority, up to middle life even, were extreme, as I well remember her expressing them.'

An entry in Lydia's diary for 20th May, 1806, is revealing:

'My chief concern now is lest I should have given too much reason for my dear friend's hoping I might yet be prevailed on to attend to his request, and I feel the restraint stronger than ever, that having before promised, I am not free to marry. I paint the scene of his return, and whichever way I take, nothing but misery and guilt seems to await me. . . . Thou knowest these consequences of my regard for thy dear saint were not intended by me, and that when first I regarded him otherwise than as a Christian brother, I believed myself free to do so, imagining him I first loved *united to another!*'

Charles Simeon, when he knew that Martyn's proposal had been sent home, took horse and rode into Cornwall, the erect precise old bachelor, a most quaint ambassador of love. But Lydia had already written her refusal when

Simeon came. 'May the Lord comfort me by him' her diary said as she prepared to meet him. She was edified by seeing 'how a Christian lives.' But the hope of his journey had not been her comfort so much as Henry Martyn's, and he came away depressed. Lydia admitted that she had 'entered into a correspondence with Henry Martyn and expressed too freely her regard,' but she once more paraded her scruple about Mr John. He was not yet married and she was not free.

Simeon brushed it away and told her no objection was insuperable except her mother's prohibition, and that he was not disposed to regard as everlasting.

But he rode back depressed to Cambridge and sent out to India a letter which Martyn also found depressing; while Lydia, with her gift for prolonging emotional situations, wrote another letter 'to bid him a last farewell.'

It was well for Martyn that the greatest task of his life had just begun to fill his thoughts. The 'Associated Clergy' in their desire for Bible translation had sent to him to ask if he would make a New Testament in Hindustani, the existing one being 'unintelligible to the vulgar,' and also a satisfactory version in Persian, since neither that of Mr Colebrook, the great Sanskrit scholar, nor of the Serampore missionaries, had quite the idiomatic freedom that was needed. Already Martyn's uncomfortable church-like house was filled with strangely assorted guests who hung about him, now a learned Muslim from Patna, now a Roman Catholic father from the Propaganda, now a Jew from Babylon, now an Armenian from Jerusalem (a very agreeable Armenian padre in a black little cassock exactly such as we wear, or ought to wear. I feel almost ashamed of my secular appearance before these very venerable and appropriate figures'), now a Prussian sergeant anxious about his soul. The strangest of them all was now to be added to the establishment—Sabat, as Martyn called him, a wild Arab with a wild history whom Mr Brown was

despatching to be his assistant in translation work. The work was to be his joy and delight and Sabat an engrossing care, so that the Martyn of these days undistracted by hope of human solace, moves in a strange calm, finding rest in toil, like the sleep of a spinning top.

'He wishes, if it please God,' wrote Corrie on a visit in September, 1808, 'to be spared on account of the translations, but with great earnestness he said, "I wish to have my whole soul swallowed up in the will of God."' ¹

And now at last a 'budgerow' was coming up the Ganges bringing one who saw in vivid colours and knew how to write down what she saw.

Mrs Sherwood, wife of the paymaster of the King's 53rd, had been a story-writer from her childhood and went about the world with a seeing eye and a warm, compassionate heart. Her *Fairchild Family* was to make her a nursery classic, but to her gossiping autobiography the Church owes all its most vivid pictures of Henry Martyn in India.

The chaplain at their last station, one of the 'Associated Clergy,' had given Mr Sherwood a note for Martyn which he hurried to present on arrival, leaving his wife in the boat.

Mr Martyn received Mr Sherwood not as a stranger but as a brother. . . . As the sun was already low, he must needs walk back with him to see me. I perfectly remember the figure of that simple-hearted and holy young man, when he entered our budgerow. He was dressed in white, and looked very pale, which however was nothing singular in India; his hair, a light brown, was raised from his forehead which was a remarkably fine one. His features were not regular, but the expression was so luminous, so intellectual, so affectionate, so beaming with Divine charity, that no one could have looked at his features and thought of their shape or form—the out-beaming of his soul would absorb the attention of every observer. There was a very decided air, too, of the gentleman about Mr Martyn,

¹ *Memoirs of Daniel Corrie*, p. 118.

and a perfection of manners which, from his extreme attention to all minute civilities, might seem almost inconsistent with the general bent of his thoughts to the most serious subjects. He was as remarkable for ease as for cheerfulness, and in these particulars his *Journal* does not give a graphic account of this blessed child of God. . . .

Mr Martyn invited us to visit him at his quarters at Dinapore, and we agreed to accept his invitation the next day. Mr Martyn's house was destitute of every comfort, though he had multitudes of people about him. I had been troubled with a pain in my face, and there was not such a thing as a pillow in the house. I could not find anything to lay my head on at night but a bolster, stuffed as hard as a pin-cushion. We had not, as is normal in India, brought our own bedding from the boats. Our kind friend had given us his own room; but I could get no rest. After breakfast Mr Martyn had family prayers, which he commenced by singing a hymn. He had a rich, deep voice, and a fine taste for vocal music. After singing he read a chapter, explained parts of it and prayed extempore. Afterwards he withdrew to his studies.

This however I can never forget, that Henry Martyn was one of the very few persons whom I have ever met who appeared never to be drawn away from one leading and prevailing object of interest. He did not appear like one who felt the necessity of contending with the world and denying himself its delights.¹

She little guessed the struggles that had been the price of serenity for the man whom she described as 'walking in this turbulent world with peace in his mind and charity in his heart.'

¹ *Life of Mrs Sherwood, Chiefly Autobiographical*, 1854, p. 340, etc.

CHAPTER X

THE LINGUIST

IT was in June 1807 that a definite proposal came from David Brown that Martyn should translate the New Testament into Hindustani (or Urdu) and supervise translations into Persian and Arabic, with the help of two men whom they would send to him as specialists in these languages, Mirza Muhammad Fitrat of Benares and Nathaniel Sabat, an Arab educated at Baghdad.

Martyn accepted the task with diffidence.

Perspicuity is not the only requisite [he wrote]; a certain portion of grace is desirable and dignity indispensable. The Mahometans are more affected with sound than even the Greeks.

That a man of Martyn's critical power should, after so few years in the country venture upon work for which he had so high a standard is in any case remarkable. It is seen to be still more so when the difficulties of Hindustani study in Martyn's day are taken into account.

He found the language neglected by both eastern and western scholars, and on the whole despised by men of letters. A great living language, the tongue of sixty millions, Hindustani was not yet standardized by any universal work of literature. Martyn was making it more and more his own as Carey had made Bengali, and learning it always with reference to life, picking out with his pundit the most used words in the vocabulary, or fetching in a story-teller from the bazaar to be his teacher. This language, as yet a tongue of intercourse rather than of books, he by a prophetic instinct seized on as a great vehicle for religious truth. Time has proved him right.

All his critical skill went into his translation. He refused to be hurried.

You chide me for not trusting my Hindoostanee to the press. I congratulate myself. Last week we began the correction of it: present—a Seid of Delhi, a Poet of Lucknow, three or four literati of Patna, and Babir Ali in the chair. Sabat and myself assessors. After four days' hard labour, five hours each day, we reached to the end of the second chapter, so when you will have a gospel I do not know.

When even his scrupulous taste was satisfied that the work might be sent to the printer, its publication was delayed by a fire at Serampore. And before the book had come into circulation he had passed from India and the world. But he left it as a legacy of price. His patient consultations with Indian scholars had prepared for it a welcome. It was even set as a text-book in Mohammedan schools in Agra. Martyn himself was too scholarly to hope that his work was final. 'I have too little faith in the instruments to believe that the first edition will be excellent,' he told David Brown. Yet fifty years later it was written of Martyn's work: 'All subsequent translations have, as a matter of course, proceeded upon it as a work of excellent skill and learning and rigid fidelity.'¹ So he played his part in introducing the 'Great Intruder' whose presence has meant so much of upheaval and stir in the spirit and brain of India.

Hour after hour as the work proceeded Henry Martyn sat in close daily intercourse with Mohammedan scholars, and he learned to know as few men know the Muslim outlook upon life and God. 'I read everything I can pick up about the Mohammedans,' one of his letters said. But it was in long, eager conversations, when dictionaries and reed pens were thrust aside in the interest of the moment, that he gained that astonishing mastery of

¹ Rev. R. C. Mather, LL.D., *Monograph on Hindustani Versions of the Old and New Testaments.*

Muslim ways of thought which won the respect of the doctors of Shiraz.

The conversations, often lasting late into the night, were startling to both parties. Henry Martyn never assumed the superior attitude of the man who cannot be ruffled. It was well seen that he cared with his whole soul for the matters he talked about and the men he talked with. 'My tongue is parched,' he wrote, 'and my hand trembles from the violent onsets I have had this day with moonshee and pundit.'

On the text 'the time cometh, that he that killeth you shall think he doeth God service,' he allowed and declared the lawfulness of putting infidels to death, and the certainty of salvation to believers dying in battle with infidels; and that it was no more strange than for the magistrate to have power to put an offender to death.

In the evening had long disputes with moonshee on the enjoyments of heaven, but I felt bitter mortification at not having command of language. However I was enabled to tell the moonshee one thing which rather confused him, namely, that my chief delight even now in the world was the enjoyment of God's presence.

So in long intimate talk and in the heat of argument with men who, in spite of themselves, grew to love him and, if they sometimes left him in a passion, returned again to work with him, Martyn began to learn the religious mind of Islam.

Above all things [he wrote], *seriousness* in argument with them seems most desirable, for without it they laugh away the clearest proofs. Zeal for making proselytes they are used to and generally attribute to a false motive; but a tender concern manifested for their souls is certainly new to them, and seemingly produces corresponding seriousness in their minds.

But he knew the limitations of argument.

I wish a spirit of enquiry may be excited, but I lay not much stress upon *clear arguments*; the work of God is seldom wrought in this way.

The possibilities of his work in Arabic, the great religious tongue of the Muslim world, fired his imagination. As he began the Arabic New Testament he wrote, 'So now, favente Deo, we will begin to preach to Arabia, Syria, Persia, India, Tartary, China, half of Africa, all the south coast of the Mediterranean and Turkey, and one tongue shall suffice for them all.'

Brown and Buchanan sent to assist him in this work an extraordinary and tormenting character, whom they might have chosen expressly for the discipline of a saint. When Mrs Sherwood first met him at Henry Martyn's dinner table she poured out into her diary impressions of 'that wild man of the desert':

Every feature in the large disk of Sabat's face was what we should call exaggerated. His eyebrows were arched, black, and strongly pencilled; his eyes dark and round, and from time to time flashing with unsubdued emotion, and ready to kindle to flame on the most trifling occasion. His nose was high, his mouth wide, his teeth large, and looked white in contrast with his bronzed complexion and fierce black mustachios. He was a large and powerful man, and generally wore a skull-cap of rich shawling, or embroidered silk, with circular flaps of the same hanging over each ear.

She expounded the details of his costume, silk attire, dagger, ear-rings and golden chain, as though she could not satisfy her own interest in that striking figure.

This son of the desert never sat in a chair without contriving to tuck up his legs under him on the seat, in attitude very like a tailor on his board. The only languages which he was able to speak were Persian, Arabic, and a very little bad Hindustani; but what was wanting in the words of this man was more than made up by the loudness with which he uttered them, for he had a voice like roaring thunder.

When that mighty voice first resounded through Martyn's bungalow, Sabat was midway in a wild career. An Arab of the Arabs, after a life of wanderings, passions,

remorses, protestations, recantations, he was at last sewn up in a sack and dropped by orders of a Malayan prince to the bottom of the sea. But his last message, the message of a lonely prisoner writing in his own blood, declared that he died in the Christian faith. It had taken the death of one saint and the life of another to win him.

He was first driven to Christianity by remorse. The friend of his youth, with whom he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, came across an Arabic Bible in Cabul of all unlikely places, and far from any human teacher became a disciple of Christ. The change in him could not be hid, and he had to fly for his life. He came to Bokhara. Sabat his friend was in the city.

'I had no pity,' said Sabat afterwards. 'I delivered him up to Morad Shah the king.' In the market-place they cut off one of the Christian's hands, Sabat the informer standing by in the crowd that watched. Then they pressed him to recant.

He made no answer [Sabat said afterwards], but looked up steadfastly towards heaven, like Stephen, the first martyr, his eyes streaming with tears. He looked at me, but it was with the countenance of forgiveness. His other hand was then cut off. But he never changed, and when he bowed his head to receive the blow of death all Bokhara seemed to say, 'What new thing is this?'

Sabat could not ease himself of his friend's last look. In South India he read for himself the book that had made a martyr. Then he all but bullied the chaplain, Dr Kerr, until he gave him baptism. But in sooth, when Martyn first knew him Sabat had gone but a very little way along the Christian path.

Sabat lives and eats with me and goes to his bungalow at night, so that I hope he has no care on his mind. On Sunday morning he went to church with me. While I was in the vestry, a bearer took away his chair from him, saying it was another gentleman's. The Arab took fire and left the church, and when I sent the clerk after him he would not return.

That was the precursor of many storms. At any moment Martyn looking up from his books would find flashing black eyes and a livid countenance glaring at him, while floods of angry Arabic or Persian poured forth in a voice of thunder demanding the instant dismissal of one of the servants or a fellow translator for some insult; or threatening eternal wrath because when he was late for dinner Martyn and his guests sat down without him. Naturally Sabat looms large in Martyn's journal.

Poor Sabat fell into one of his furious passions. I thought of St James's words, 'set on fire of hell.' He thirsted for revenge on one of the servants who had offended him. He went and fetched his sword and dagger and with lips trembling with rage vowed he would kill the man.

Sabat has been tolerably quiet this week, but think of the keeper of a lunatic and you see me. After he got home at night he sent a letter complaining of a high crime and misdemeanour in some servant; I sent him a soothing letter and the wild beast fell asleep.

He said he would never live under the same roof with Mirza. And why? Because he knew the servants would at last say, 'This belongs to the Hindoostanee moonshee, and this to the Arabian moonshee,' thus equalizing him with an Indian, and depriving him of his Arabian honour.

Somehow Martyn managed to love his tormentor.

He is very dear to me. When I think of the circumstances of his life, and look upon him, I cannot help considering it as one of the most singular and interesting events of my life that I was brought acquainted with him. Indeed, everything in the east has been interesting to me.

He sat with Sabat night after night when he was ill, and handled his tantrums with a gentleness and humility that few men could have shown.

If in any of our disputes I get the better of him, he is stung to the quick and does not forget it for days. So I avoid as much as possible all questions gendering strifes. If he sees

anything wrong in me, any appearance of pride or love of grandeur, he tells me of it without ceremony, and thus he is a friend indeed. He describes so well the character of a missionary that I am ashamed of my great house and mean to sell it at the first opportunity and take the smallest quarters I can find.

He loves as a Christian brother, but as a logician, he holds us all in supreme contempt. He assumes all the province of reasoning as his own by right, and decides every question magisterially.

But as the translation proceeded Martyn found it impossible ever to convince this logician of a flaw in his own work.

Sabat would often contend for a whole morning [Mrs Sherwood says] about the meaning of an unimportant word; and Mr Martyn has not unseldom ordered his palanquin and come over to us, to get out of the sound of the voice of the fierce Ishmaelite.

‘If all the Indian moonshees in Calcutta should unite,’ said Martyn, ‘I fear Sabat would not value their opinion a straw. “He did not come from Persia to India to learn Persian.”’

In Arabic, Sabat’s grammar needed watchfulness, but his style was nervous and idiomatic. In Persian his writing was more than usually interlarded with Arabic phrases; and Martyn became convinced that it was faulty in style, and that the final New Testament translation in Persian would not be made outside Persia itself.

Before the second edition of the Arabic what say you, [he wrote to David Brown] ‘o my carrying the first with me to Arabia, having under the other arm the Persian to be examined at Shiraz or Teheran?’

So he planned, his mind moving with an almost gay freedom at this beloved task. He speaks with firm assurance, always the master and never the slave of meticulous grammatical details. In Arabic:

The New Testament we have, edited by Erpenius, is indescribably bad; it is not a translation but a paraphrase, and that always wrong.

Greatly daring, he will even pass independent judgment on the English Authorized Version:

It appears to me that the two royal authors have suffered more from the plebeian touch of their interpreters, than even the prophets or any others but Job.

Nay, the Martyn of these days is audacious.

The books which you mention I shall expect with impatience. Street's version; Hammond who is a learned man. Horne is all words. Next to oriental translations, my wish and prayer is, that I may live to give a new English version of the Bible from Job to Malachi. Such are some of my modest desires.

A mind like Martyn's could not be incessantly busy with the details of half a dozen languages, without enquiry as to their relation to one another and the nature of all language.

I suppose [he wrote to Corrie] that of all things in the world language is that which submits itself most obsequiously to our examination, and may therefore be understood better than anything else. For we can summon it before us without any trouble, and make it assume any form we please, and turn it upside down and inside out, and yet I must confess the more I look at it the more I am puzzled. I seem to be gazing with stupid wonder at the legerdmain of a conjuror.

I am glad you take a liking to Hebrew. It transports me at present. My speculations occupy me night and day. . . . I carry these thoughts to bed with me, and there am I all night long in my dreams tracing etymologies, and measuring the power of some Hebrew letter.

I sit hours alone, contemplating this mysterious language. I sometimes say in my vain heart, I will either make a deep cut in the mine of philology or I will do nothing.

How do you go in Hebrew? Though my duty calls me

to other languages, I am perpetually speculating on that, and the nature of language in general. It goes against the grain with me now to read a little Arabic or Greek, as much as it once did to cram a proposition I did not understand. How or by what magic is it, that we convey our thoughts to one another with such ease and accuracy? . . . It is probable that for some time to come, as long as I am engaged in translation, my thoughts will be rather tinged with philology. . . . But on my own mind I perceive that I must keep a tight rein. I beg your prayers that after having begun in the Spirit I may not leave off in the flesh.

Truly love is better than knowledge. Much as I long to know what I seek after, I would rather have the smallest portion of humility and love than the knowledge of an archangel.

CHAPTER XI

CAWNPORE

THE burning winds of the spring in Cawnpore were blowing, and the Sherwood family stationed there with the 53rd Regiment were existing as best they might. Every outer door was shut, and behind grass screens they sat almost in darkness, under the punkah¹ in the central hall as the most endurable place. Captain Sherwood had his table with account books and journal before him. In a side room was the family's faithful factotum, Sergeant Clarke, copying manuscripts. In another side room a silent ayah chewed and chewed as she kept guard over the white-faced baby on the floor with her toys—the motherless Sally rescued by Mrs Sherwood from starvation and now creeping back to life.

The Sherwoods had no little child of their own in the spring of 1809; the two babies born to them in India had died like primroses in an oven: but the motherly woman had hopes of another child in her nursery after the rains. Meanwhile the hot days dragged on wearily. Mrs Sherwood lay on the sofa, a table beside her, with pen and ink and any books she could lay hold of. 'Somebody lent me Robinson Crusoe, and Mr Sherwood picked up an old copy of Sir Charles Grandison.' On a tiny chair by that sofa, with a tiny table beside it, sat the demurest of little quiet girls, the orphan, Annie Childe, another babe whom Mrs Sherwood had rescued as a little drugged starveling from a heartless nurse. Cared for and daintily clad she looked 'a delicate little lady,' and passed the long hot days placidly enough at Mrs Sherwood's side.

¹ A large cloth fan fixed to a swinging frame and operated by a cord.

I had my orphan, my little Annie, always by me. . . . I had given her a good-sized box, painted green, with a lock and key. She was the neatest of all neat little people, somewhat faddy and particular. She was the child of all others to live with an ancient grandmother. Annie's treasures were few, but they were all contained in her green box. She never wanted occupation: she was either dressing her doll or finding pretty verses in her Bible, marking the places with an infinitude of minute pieces of paper.¹

They were sitting so on the morning of the 30th May, 1809, the silence only broken by the click of the punkah and the moaning of the hot wind outside, when, the lady tells us,

We suddenly heard the quick steps of many bearers. Mr Sherwood ran out to the leeward of the house, and exclaimed, 'Mr Martyn!'

The next moment I saw him lead in that excellent man, and saw our visitor, a moment afterwards, fall down in a fainting fit. . . . In his fainting state Mr Martyn could not have retired to the sleeping-room which we caused to be prepared immediately for him, because we had no means of cooling any sleeping-room so thoroughly as we could the hall. We therefore had a couch set for him in the hall. There he was laid, and very ill he was for a day or two. The hot winds left us and we had a close suffocating calm. Mr Martyn could not lift his head from the couch.

Martyn had been transferred by the military authorities from Dinapore to Cawnpore in April 1809, at the hottest moment in the year. He left Sabat and his pretty wife Ameena (a couple who spent their time together in noisy quarrels) to come up by water with all the household goods, and he set out by palanquin, saying good-bye to Dinapore with some regret.

Preparation for departure does not disturb and disorder me as it used to do. The little things of this world come more as matters of course. Still I find it necessary to repeat often in

¹ All the quotations from Mrs Sherwood in this chapter are taken from her *Life of Mrs. Sherwood, Chiefly Autobiographical*, 1854.

the day, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on Thee.' My men seem to be in a more flourishing state than they have yet been. About thirty attend every night. I have had a delightful party this week of six young men who I hope will prove to be true soldiers of Christ.

That three-hundred-mile palanquin journey in the heat was an absurdity. 'I transported myself with such rapidity to this place, that I nearly transported myself out of the world,' he told David Brown. At first he travelled by night only. But Mrs Sherwood explains that between Allahabad and Cawnpore there was no halting-place, and Martyn when he fainted in her hall had been travelling for two days and two nights without a pause, slung in a palanquin that could do nothing to keep out winds that burnt like fire from a furnace.

She took care of him, and he had one of his rare glimpses of domestic life.

When Mr Martyn got a little better he became very cheerful, and seemed quite happy with us all about him. He commonly lay on his couch in the hall during the morning, with many books near to his hand, and amongst these always a Hebrew Bible and a Greek Testament. Soon, very soon, he began to talk to me of what was passing in his mind, calling to me at my table to tell me his thoughts.

In a very few days he had discerned the sweet qualities of the orphan Annie, and had so encouraged her to come about him that she drew her chair, and her table, and her green box to the vicinity of his couch. She showed him her verses, and consulted him about the adoption of more passages into the number of her favourites. What could have been more beautiful than to see the Senior Wrangler and the almost infant Annie thus conversing together, while the elder seemed to be in no way conscious of any condescension in bringing his mind down to the level of the child's?

When Mr Martyn lost the worst symptoms of his illness he used to sing a great deal. He had an uncommonly fine voice and fine ear; he could sing many fine chants, and a vast variety of hymns and psalms. He would insist upon it that I

should sing with him, and he taught me many tunes, all of which were afterwards brought into requisition; and when fatigued himself, he made me sit by his couch and practise these hymns.

And so the good woman mothered him, knowing that she had found a saint, but a little concerned because he did not seem 'very distinct in all his religious views' (there is no indistinctness about the views of the writer of the *Fairchild Family*), and because of a certain vague trustfulness over money. He sent off a coolie to draw for him long arrears of salary, involving the payment to the messenger of some hundreds of pounds counted out in silver into cotton bags.

Mr Martyn said in a quiet voice to us, 'The coolie does not come with my money. I was thinking this morning how rich I should be; and now I should not wonder in the least if he has run off and taken my treasure with him.' 'What!' we exclaimed. 'Surely you have not sent a common coolie for your pay?' 'I have,' he replied.

The money arrived; and Martyn was at a loss to understand his friends' concern about it.

But he was now recovering and must get to the work of his new station. His first impressions, outside the Sherwoods' bungalow, were not cheering.

I do not like this place at all. There is no church, not so much as the fly of a tent; what to do I know not, except to address Lord Minto in a private letter.

I feel fixed at the last place where I shall ever live in India, and sometimes look with interest at the road that leads to Cabul and Candahar. . . . I hear of a Mrs A. as one who is religious, and is even suspected of singing Psalms of a Sunday. Such flagrant violations of established rules seem to mark her for one of our fraternity.

His first service in Cawnpore, himself still a tottering convalescent, was held out of doors on the parade ground on 14th May.

Two officers dropped down, and some of the men. They wondered how I could go through the fatigue. When I looked at the other end of the square which they had formed, I gave up all hopes of making myself heard, but it seems they did hear. There are above a hundred men in the hospital. What time shall I find for doing half what ought to be done?

Already he had made friends, as was his way in every place, with a small group of 'serious' soldiers. Mrs Sherwood takes up her pen again:

As soon as Mr Martyn could in any way exert himself, he made acquaintance with some of the pious men of the regiment (the same poor men whom I have mentioned before, who used to meet in ravines, in huts, in woods and in every wild and secret place they could find, to read and pray and sing); and he invited them to come to him in our house, Mr Sherwood making no objection. The time first fixed was an evening after parade, and in consequence they all appeared at the appointed hour, each carrying their mora (a low seat), and their books tied up in pocket-handkerchiefs. In this very unmilitary fashion they were all met in a body by some officers. It was with some difficulty that Mr Sherwood could divert the storm of displeasure. . . . These poor good men were received by Mr Martyn in his own apartment; and a most joyful meeting he had with them. We did not join the party, but we heard them praying and singing and the sound was very sweet. Mr Martyn then promised them that when he had got a house he would set aside a room for them, where they might come every evening.

Martyn bought a house near the Sepoy lines. 'Now, Cawnpore is about one of the most dusty places in the world,' said Mrs Sherwood, who disapproved his choice, 'and the Sepoy lines are the most dusty part of Cawnpore.' His compound was not near enough to his friends, but it had its advantages, for its 'funeral avenue' of palm-trees and aloes that rattled in the hot wind, led not to one bungalow but two. This was admirable. Sabat and the goods arrived, and the Arab and his lady were

bestowed in the lesser bungalow, while Martyn inhabited the larger, or such part of it as was not filled with 'pious soldiers' reading the Bible, scribes copying translations amidst piles of manuscripts and dictionaries, or a medley of guests who gathered from no one knows where.

A vast number and variety of huts and sheds formed one boundary of the compound; these were concealed by the shrubs. But who would venture to give any account of the heterogeneous population which occupied these buildings? For besides the usual complement of servants found in and about the houses of persons of a certain rank in India, we must add to Mr Martyn's household a multitude of pundits, moonshis, schoolmasters and poor nominal Christians, who hung about him because there was no other to give them a handful of rice for their daily maintenance; and most strange was the murmur which proceeded at times from this ill-assorted and discordant multitude.

Such was Mrs Sherwood's impression of the *ménage*.

Sabat was as pleased as a child with his new mansion, and work went on apace.

He is gentle and almost as diligent as I could wish [said Martyn]. Everything seems to please him. His bungalow joins mine, and is very neat; so from morning to night we work together, and the work goes forward. The first two or three days he translated into Arabic and I was his scribe; but this being too fatiguing to me, we have been since that at the Persian.

The spurt did not last long.

Sabat does not work half hard enough for me. I feel grieved and ashamed that we produce so little, but the fault is not mine. I would never willingly be employed about anything else, but Sabat has no ardour. The smallest difficulty discourages him, the slightest headache is an excuse for shutting up his books, and doing nothing for days.

Sabat creeps on, and smokes his hookah with great complacency if he gets through a chapter a day. I grieve at this

hireling spirit, but for peace sake I have long ceased to say anything.

At sunset the translation was dropped, and the frail linguist, whose ardour had exhausted the energies of his various assistants, went out for exercise. Two evenings in the week he spent with his soldiers. On the others he was apt to gravitate towards that friendly household of the Sherwoods. For the soaring linguist was very human. Mrs Sherwood took her airing in an open palanquin, wearing 'a lace cap with Europe ribbons,' while Captain Sherwood rode, and Martyn would often arrive at their bungalow before his hosts returned.

Two or three times a week he used to come on horseback, with the sais running by his side. He sat his horse as if he were not quite aware that he was on horseback, and he generally wore his coat as if it were falling from his shoulders. When he dismounted, his favourite place was in the veranda with a book, till we came in from our airing. And when we returned many a sweet and long discourse we had whilst waiting for our dinner.

In August 1809 a little daughter was born to the Sherwoods, whom they determined to name after their baby Lucy who had died. When Martyn came for the christening in the cool of the evening, the family had not yet returned from the sunset airing. He told the servants to set in readiness a table and water in a cool corner of the long veranda, not knowing that he had chosen for the christening the very spot where the first little daughter had been laid dying on a mattress to catch what air there was.

Never can I forget the solemn manner with which Mr Martyn went through the service, or the beautiful and earnest blessing which he implored for my baby, when he took her in his arms after the service was concluded. I still fancy that I see that child of God as he looked down tenderly on the gentle babe, and then looked upwards.

This babe in infancy had so peculiar a gentleness of aspect that Mr. Martyn called her Serena.

Her parents decided to go down to Calcutta in October and take the advice of the best doctor in India as to whether they could rear her in Cawnpore. They broke up their household in the full expectation that the mother would be sent home to save her baby's life.

The Sherwood's last week was spent in Martyn's house. They slept in their house-boats and went to him for breakfast. The children and ayahs went to rooms set apart for them, and Captain and Mrs Sherwood went into the hall, where Martyn nearly always had some guest for breakfast. 'We often sat long over breakfast.' Then Martyn turned to his translation, and the Sherwoods went about their business.

Mr Martyn's house was peaceful, holy and cheerful.

At the sunset airing with the day's work done Martyn enjoyed his friends again, and on their last Sunday he arranged a little chapel with his careful nicety of touch in one of the long verandas, where he gave the Communion to the Sherwoods and to sixteen of his 'pious soldiers.'

When he had seen them down to their boats for the last time, 'blessing our little children,' he returned to Cawnpore a lonely man. It is probable that the army society of the place was terrified of Martyn. Otherwise it is hard to explain the gaucherie of their manners to the padre.

The pride of my heart has discovered itself very strongly since I entered this new circle. They sometimes take no more notice of me than a dog, at other times vouchsafe a dignified condescension, so that were it not to become all things to all men in order to save some, I should never trouble them with my company. But how then should I be like Christ? I would rather pass my time with children if I had the choice.

In his loneliness his thoughts would not be kept from Lydia. 'I love so true that though it is now the fifth year since I parted from the object of my affections, she is as dear to me as ever.' Sally was now dying of tuberculosis and Martyn's home letters now let slip the fact that this man with his gigantic plans knew well enough, when he gave it a thought, that the disease which had killed all his near relatives was working in him also. The dusty lines in Cawnpore were trying to him, and he began to confess that every sermon he preached left him in pain. 'There is something in the air at the close of the rains so unfavourable that public speaking at that time is a violent strain upon the whole body. . . . I am sorry to say that my strength for public speaking is almost gone. My ministrations among the Europeans at this station have injured my lungs,' he told David Brown.

They were difficult ministrations even for a strong man. Soldiers fainted at the out-of-door parades, and ladies chattered in the General's drawing-room where he went on for a second service. He decided to ask for the use of the billiard-room but they gave him the riding-school instead. 'The effluvium was such as would please only the knights of the turf.' When the rains came, out-of-door parades had to be scratched. 'The General has not yet forwarded to Government the proposal for a church,' Martyn wrote after long delay. But he at length prevailed on the authorities to adapt an ordinary bungalow near his own for church services. He watched eagerly over the alterations, but they went slowly. In December 1809, when every service was leaving him exhausted, Sabat challenged him to add to his labours another sermon, to the strangest congregation that ever gathered to listen to a saint. Beggars of all sorts found their way to Martyn's house, among them crowds of religious mendicants. To save time he gave out that his alms would be given only once a week. The news went round the beggar world, and every Sunday his gates were thrown open to admit

a motley crowd, to whom he gave small coins or rice.

Sabat said to me yesterday, 'Your beggars are come, why do not you preach to them? it is your duty.' I made excuses. But the true cause is shame. I am afraid of exposing myself to the contempt of Sabat, my servants, and the mob, by attempting to speak in a language which I do not speak well. This therefore I desire to keep ever before my mind, that I must get to the Kingdom through great contempt.

Next Sunday:

In the afternoon the beggars came, to the number of above four hundred, and by the help of God, I determined to preach to them though I felt as if I were leading to execution.

There was an open space in his garden, green after the rain, with a raised platform of lime at its centre. Here the beggars were seated, and Martyn climbed on to the platform and told them 'that he gave with pleasure what alms he could afford, but wished to give them something better—the knowledge of God.'

The Sherwoods encouraged by doctors to remain in India, returned to Cawnpore that December. When Henry Martyn rode to welcome his friends, 'he looked, we thought, very ill, and complained of what he called a fire burning in his breast.'

Mrs Sherwood went to see what he was doing with the beggars.

No dreams, she said, or visions excited in the delirium of a raging fever could surpass these realities. They were young and old, male and female, tall and short, athletic and feeble, bloated and wizened; some clothed in abominable rags, some nearly without clothes; some plastered with mud and cow-dung; others with matted, uncombed locks streaming down to their heels; others with heads bald or scabby; every countenance being hard and fixed, as it were, by the continual indulgence of bad passions; the features having become exaggerated, and the lips blackened with tobacco or blood-red with the juice of the henna.

We had to make our way through a dense crowd, with a temperature often rising above 92°, whilst the sun poured its burning rays upon us through a lurid haze of dust. So many monstrous and diseased limbs, and hideous faces, were displayed before us and pushed forward for our inspection, that I have often made my way to the *chabootra* with my eyes shut, whilst Mr Sherwood led me. I still imagine that I hear the calm, distinct, and musical tones of Henry Martyn as he stood raised above the people.

They were no dispassionate audience. Often as he preached bursts of anger would arise, with

shouts and curses and deep and lengthened groans, hissings and gestures till Mr Martyn was compelled to silence. But when the storm passed away again might he be heard going on where he had left off, in the same calm, steadfast tone, as if he were incapable of irritation from the interruption. Mr Martyn himself assisted in giving each person his *pice* (copper) after the address was concluded; and when he withdrew to his bungalow I have seen him drop almost fainting on a sofa, for he had, as he often said, a slow inflammation burning in his chest, and one which he knew must eventually terminate his existence.

All that spring they watched him tear himself to pieces; cheerful enough when he came round after a day of translation with the sense of something done, and picked up the baby Lucy for a game before she went to bed; but plainly enough a sick man every Sunday when the four services left him half-fainting with pain and exhaustion.

Study never makes me ill—scarcely ever fatigues me—but my lungs! death is seated there; it is speaking that kills me. Nature intended me for chamber-counsel, not for a pleader at the bar. But the call of Jesus Christ bids me cry aloud, and spare not.

When the hot winds blew again in April he had to confess to David Brown and Corrie that taking a service always left him with pain in his chest and hardly able to speak above a whisper.

Corrie took boat for Cawnpore to see for himself what could be done. He found Martyn every evening, after ever so little exertion in speaking, reduced to loss of voice, pain in his chest, and such restless fatigue as kept him awake, or troubled his sleep with confused and distressing dreams ('was walking with Lydia, both much affected, and speaking on the things dearest to us both. I awoke, and behold it was a dream'); yet buoyed up with hope and plans for his work. 'My church is nearly ready for the organ and the bell. . . . My work at present is evidently to translate; hereafter I may itinerate.'

'This morning Martyn said he thought a month's silence would entirely restore him.' Corrie did what he could. With the General's consent he moved himself and his good sister to Cawnpore to nurse Martyn and take his services for him.

July 31st, 1810. On my first arrival [Corrie writes] he recruited greatly for a fortnight, but is now, to say the least, at a stand. He has agreed to go on the river to try the effect of change and solitude. He objects to going to sea at present. . . . The truth is he expects the New Testament will soon be done in Arabic. Your applications for Arabic have set him to work anew with an ardour that nothing but death can repress.

For a few months of bliss Martyn became, far more than he was aware, the central figure of a sort of double household. Corrie, that understanding person, was with him, taking services and setting him free for the beloved translation. Miss Corrie was with the Sherwoods, and in the evening there were the ladies to take for an airing. Of those evenings Mrs Sherwood writes:

I often went out with Mr Martyn in his gig, during that month, when he used to call either for me or Miss Corrie, and whoever went with him went at the peril of their lives. He never looked where he was driving, but went dashing through thick and thin, being always occupied in reading Hindoostanee by word of mouth, or discussing some text of

Scripture. I certainly never expected to have survived a lesson he gave me in his gig, in the midst of the plain at Cawnpore, on the pronunciation of one of the Persian letters.

The two households had so many meals together that they found with amusement that the servants were making common cause, and the same cheese appeared on the table at either house. There were hymn-singings in the bungalow, and evening services for which they went together, 'not omitting the children,' into the unfinished church near Martyn's house.

'We are inexpressibly happy together,' said Corrie, and for a time they thought that Martyn was rallying. He himself, engrossed with the great work and delighted with his friends, was generally far too preoccupied to realize that he was ill. When a bout of pain and faintness gave him pause, and he stopped to realize that the family disease had clutched him, he was probably less concerned about it than any of the circle that watched him anxiously. 'He spoke of being in a consumption in the tone in which most people would speak of a legacy,' said Corrie.

As he flagged more and more they decided to take him on the river. They hired a pinnace in which to go together. Mrs Sherwood describes the mornings in the cabin:

Mr Martyn sent a quantity of books, and used to take possession of the sofa, with all his books about him. He was often studying Hebrew, and had huge lexicons lying by him. Little Lucy used always to make her way to Mr Martyn when he was by any means approachable. On one occasion she seated herself on his huge lexicon. He would not suffer her to be disturbed, though he required his book every instant.

Still he flagged, and they told him he must go to sea. He would not believe them at first; but as the Arabic translation drew to a close and criticisms reached him of Sabat's style, he turned seawards eagerly. If they wanted him to go to sea, why not sail to Arabia and make before

he died the perfect version of the Arabic New Testament? On 22nd August, 1810, he wrote to David Brown:

DEAREST SIR,—

Shall I come down, or shall I not? I have an aversion to Calcutta, with all the talking and preaching to which I shall be tempted there; yet you insist upon it, and sooner or later I must pass through you to the sea, or I shall be buried here. . . . I want silence and diversion, a little dog to play with; or what would be best of all, a dear little child. . . . Perhaps you could learn when the ships usually sail for Mocha. I have set my heart upon going there; I could be there and back in six months.

HENRY MARTYN.

The General at Cawnpore granted unlimited leave of absence to one whom he probably looked on as a dying man.

Martyn's last day with his friends was a Sunday. They could not take their eyes off him, believing that they should see his face no more. There was a triumphant glow about him, for it was a great day. The new bell was rung for the first time to call the people to the opening service in the church that he had made. 'There was a considerable congregation,' and Sergeant Clarke in his red coat was parish clerk, and Corrie read the prayers. Martyn stood up to preach his first and last sermon in the new church.

A bright glow prevailed, a brilliant light shone from his eyes. He was filled with hope and joy. Most eloquent, earnest and affectionate was his address.

But when they went to his bungalow after service he sank fainting on a sofa in the hall. There remained one more effort in Cawnpore, the last act of his ministry there, the sermon to the beggars.

When the sun began to descend we went over to Mr Martyn's bungalow to hear his last address to the *fakeers*. It was one of those sickly, hazy, burning evenings. Mr Martyn nearly fainted again after this effort, and when he got to his

house, with his friends about him, he told us that he was afraid he had not been the means of doing the smallest good to any one of the strange people whom he had thus so often addressed.

But Martyn was wrong.

As he preached one of his first sermons to the beggars a group of young men, taking the air in a kiosk on the garden wall, sipping sherbet and smoking, had been struck by the strange proceedings in the English house next door. Down they came from the wall to see what Martyn was about. They pushed through the crowd and stood before him in a row, their arms folded, their turbans slightly tilted on one side and their lips drawn up in a superb sneer. But one of them heard enough to rouse his keenest curiosity. He was a young Muslim, a sheikh of Delhi, a professor of Persian and Arabic, but with the heart of a learner.

That gospel preached to the poor seemed to him something new, and he determined to know more of Martyn's faith. He did not venture direct to the Christian preacher, but made interest with Sabat to be employed as copier of the Persian gospel. He even sought out Martyn's school-children and asked them to repeat their lessons. Then he found a great opportunity when they gave him charge of a complete copy of the Persian New Testament on its way to the bookbinder. He held back the book till he had read it all, and with the reading came the great decision.

On that last Sunday he was still unknown to Martyn, but Martyn's plans were known to him, and Sheikh Salih was making ready to follow the preacher to Calcutta and ask him there for baptism.¹

On Monday morning, 1st October, 1810, Martyn

¹ He was baptized on Whit Sunday 1811 under the name of Abd el Masih, and became eventually a clergyman and a notable Christian leader.

must leave Cawnpore. 'We were all low, very, very low,' says Mrs Sherwood. Corrie, who had struggled to save his friend, was white with the strain of parting. He had found Martyn about to make a bonfire of all his memoranda, but persuaded him to let him keep them under seal against his return, and so saved for the Church that journal by which she knows the mind of Henry Martyn. 'His life is beyond all price to us,' Corrie wrote. Only Martyn, in a strange serenity, hardly realized their anxiety. He thought that Corrie must have worked too hard, and wrote to him from his boat, 'Your pale face as it appeared on Monday morning is still before my eyes, and will not let me be easy till you tell me you are strong and prudent.'

CHAPTER XII

TO SHIRAZ

MARTYN'S budgerow, paddled from the stern, bore him down stream to the house that was above all others his Indian home.

'Entered the Hooghly,' says his journal for 25th November, 1810, 'with something of those sensations with which I should come in sight of the white cliffs of England.' At Aldeen he found the Brown children waiting to convoy him with shouts to the house, and next morning in the city another long-expected meeting took place with friends arrived from England. Thomas Thomason, Simeon's senior curate, that good, serene and diligent person, had been inspired by Martyn's example to break up his home by the riverside at Shelford and to set out in middle life with his calm, methodical wife and their small children, to give the rest of his years to the service of India.

Thomason was indeed a notable recruit. His friends had long smiled at his habit in all spare moments of pulling out of his pocket a portion of the Bible. In his own methodical way he had had his Hebrew Old Testament re-bound into sections small enough for pocket use and kept one always at hand. He now brought these years of patient study to the help of the translators in India. On his way out the good scholar was shipwrecked; he rescued each child in a sheet and their mother in a counterpane, but every book that he possessed was lost. Martyn found the family living in the heart of Calcutta, patiently collecting household goods once more, and Thomason catechizing the little English children of the settlement with his own babes—'Fair English children,

all of them elegantly dressed, standing round the desk and answering the good man's questions.'

The Thomasons were shocked at the change in Martyn. 'Dear, dear Martyn arrived,' wrote the wife, 'and we had the unspeakable delight of seeing his face. He is much altered, is thin and sallow, but he has the same loving heart.' He sat on the sofa and picked up the old intercourse with them, even to the point when the steady Thomason felt it necessary to prick the bubble of Martyn's airy speculations.

After that first long talk Thomason sat down to write to Simeon his impression of the friend so much his junior, who had always been to him both an enigma and an inspiration.

He is on his way to Arabia, where he is going in pursuit of health and knowledge. You know his genius, and what gigantic strides he takes in everything. He has some great plan in his mind of which I am no competent judge; but as far as I do understand it, the object is far too grand for one short life, and much beyond his feeble and exhausted frame. Feeble it is indeed! how fallen and changed! But let us hope that the sea-air may revive him. . . . In all other respects he is exactly the same as he was; he shines in all the dignity of love; and seems to carry about him such a heavenly majesty, as impresses the mind beyond description. But if he talks much, though in a low voice, he sinks, and you are reminded of his being 'dust and ashes.'

The Martyn of these days seems to have cast a spell over all his friends. They watched him with a kind of awe, as men who dared not interfere.

In fulfilment of a five-years'-old promise to Simeon, Martyn had his portrait painted in Calcutta.¹ It was 'thought a striking likeness,' but on seeing it David Brown remarked, 'That is not the Martyn who arrived in India, it is Martyn the recluse.' Martyn acknowledged the truth of the observation. A man could not live alone

¹ Now in the University Library, Cambridge.

with Sabat, battling with illness, stripped of every earthly hope save the perfecting of his Gospel, and come out from that seclusion unmarked.

The portrait was sent home to the India House, and Charles Simeon went up to London to claim it. His letters from India had left him unprepared for the change in Martyn's face.

It was opened. . . . I could not bear to look upon it, but turned away and went to a distance, covering my face, and in spite of every effort to the contrary, crying aloud with anguish. . . . In seeing how much he is worn I am constrained to call to my relief the thought in *Whose* service he has worn himself so much.¹

On consultation with the learned in Calcutta Martyn heard little but praise of his own Hindustani New Testament, but Sabat's work, it seemed, and especially his Persian, stood yet in need of polishing. So Martyn determined to go first to Persia. Afterwards he would travel—who knows where? to Damascus perhaps, he said, for there he might enquire as to ancient Arabic versions; or perhaps to Baghdad or the heart of Arabia itself. But Persia must come first.

'All his imaginations of Persia,' Mrs Sherwood tells us, 'were taken from the beautiful descriptions given by the poets. He often spoke of that land as of a land of roses and nightingales, of fresh flowing streams, of sparkling fountains and of breezes laden with perfumes.' A lover of Persian poetry Martyn had certainly been since Cambridge days; but he was no mere visionary, for he had been also a greedy reader of modern travels, such as Scott Waring's account of his visit to Shiraz, written in 1807.² Lord Minto listened to Martyn's statement of the aims of his journey, and gave him leave to proceed; the

¹ See H. C. G. Moule, *Charles Simeon* (I.V.F. ed. p. 108).

² *A Tour to Sheeraz by the Route of Kazroon and Feerozabad*, by Edward Scott Waring, Esq., of the Bengal Civil Establishment.

Armenians of Calcutta wrote a commendation of him to their brethren in Persia; and Martyn was ready to set out.

After long waiting he obtained a passage on the boat that was taking Mountstuart Elphinstone to Bombay as the new British Resident at Poona.

He slipped away from his Calcutta friends. 'Leaving Calcutta was so much like leaving England that I went on board my boat without giving them notice.'

'The most agreeable circumstance' in this voyage of six weeks was, he said, the companionship in 'the great cabin' of Mountstuart Elphinstone, of whose 'agreeable manners and classical acquirements' he wrote enthusiastically. It was long since Martyn had met with so omnivorous a reader, and he vastly relished the society of one only a few years older than himself who had already seen responsible service in the Muslim border-lands beyond the fringe of British India. They sat long hours on the poop, or went on shore together to walk in the cinnamon gardens of Ceylon (Martyn sent Lydia a piece of fragrant bark) canvassing many questions about books and men.

Mountstuart Elphinstone in his turn enjoyed that voyage, and wrote to a friend:

We have in Martyn an excellent scholar, and one of the mildest, cheerfullest, and pleasantest men I ever saw. He is extremely religious and disputes about the faith with the Nakhoda (the Abyssinian slave), but talks on all subjects, sacred and profane, and makes others laugh as heartily as he could do if he were an infidel. We have people who speak twenty-five languages (not apiece) on the ship.¹

The coaster crawled round Cape Comorin close to the shore, and Martyn, looking up from his Arabic, almost believed himself in Cornwall. He wrote to Lydia describing 'the great promontory of India.'

¹ See T. E. Colebrooke, *Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone*, I. p. 231.

At a distant the green waves seemed to wash the foot of the mountain, but on a nearer approach little churches were to be seen, apparently on the beach, with a row of little huts on each side. Was it these maritime situations that recalled to my mind Perran church and town in the way to Gurlyn; or made my thoughts wander on the beach to the east of Lamorran? You do not tell me whether you ever walk there, and imagine the billows that break at your feet to have made their way from India.

At Goa Martyn stood at the tomb of St Francis Xavier whose life had inspired him during his first few weeks in India. It was characteristic of him, as it would have been of the man by whose grave he stood, that his attention was drawn away from the tomb with its 'paintings and figures of bronze done in Italy' when the friar who guided him let fall a chance word about 'the grace of God in the heart.' Instantly Martyn forgot his sight-seeing and plunged into conversation with his guide.

So they drew near to Bombay on Martyn's thirtieth birthday, and his journal shows him turning, as was his wont, from the conversation of the great cabin to a higher communing.

I would that all should adore, but especially that I myself should lie prostrate. As for self, contemptible self, I feel myself saying, let it be forgotten for ever, henceforth let Christ live, let Christ reign, let Him be glorified for ever.

In Bombay he found himself a guest at Government House, and Elphinstone introduced him to good company. For there were in Bombay two men of parts, who would have made their mark in any group of intellectuals.

The older man of the two, Sir James Mackintosh, had been in his young days a friend of revolution and author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*. But the Mackintosh of middle life had repudiated his early views in no uncertain tones. 'I abhor, abjure and for ever renounce the French Revolution, with its sanguinary history, its abominable principles

and for ever execrable leaders,' he wrote, and settled down to practise at the Bar. Martyn found him as Recorder of Bombay, consoling himself for exile with a library of the schoolmen and the latest works of foreign philosophy. When he was stirred by congenial society no one could resist his good talk, in which a delicious impertinence just served to remind men of the daring of his early views.

Elphinstone introduced me to a young clergyman [Mackintosh noted in his journal] called Martyn. He seems to be a mild and benevolent enthusiast—a sort of character with which I am always half in love. We had the novelty of grace before and after dinner, all the company standing.

Padre Martyn, the saint, dined here. . . . We had two or three hours good discussion on grammar and metaphysics.

His introduction to the other man of mark in Bombay society was of greater interest to Martyn, since this was a man whose name was one to conjure with in Persia. Sir John Malcolm, a soldier turned diplomatist, had twice been sent on embassies to establish British trade and prestige in Persia. He talked Persian fluently, 'bribed like a king,' scattered presents of 'watches and pistols; mirrors and toothpicks; filagree boxes and umbrellas; cloths and muslins; with an unlimited supply of sugar, sugar-candy and chintz.' In Persia, later travellers took rank in Persian eyes according as they could or could not claim acquaintance with Malcolm Sahib. Martyn found him in Bombay writing his history of Persia and receiving the censure of Leadenhall Street for the cost of his missions.

There was a generous gesture about everything that Malcolm did. He now gave Martyn invaluable help, letters of introduction right and left, much Persian information, and a present of a Chaldee missal.

The letter that Malcolm wrote to the British Ambassador in Persia is the last portrait that has come to us from the pen of a fellow countryman.

His intention is, I believe, to go by Shiraz, Ispahan and Kermanshah to Baghdad, and to endeavour on that route to discover some ancient copies of the Gospel, which he and many other saints are persuaded lie hid in the mountains of Persia. Mr Martyn also expects to improve himself as an Oriental scholar; he is already an excellent one. His knowledge of Arabic is superior to that of any Englishman in India. He is altogether a very learned and cheerful man, but a great enthusiast in his holy calling.

I have not hesitated to tell him that I thought you would require that he should act with great caution, and not allow his zeal to run away with him. He declares he will not, and he is a man of that character that I must believe. I am satisfied that if ever you see him, you will be pleased with him. He will give you grace before and after dinner, and admonish such of your party as take the Lord's name in vain; but his good sense and great learning will delight you, whilst his constant cheerfulness will add to the hilarity of your party.

The friends Martyn made while waiting in Bombay for a ship to the Persian Gulf were the usual motley company. Besides the learned of Islam there was 'a rope-maker from London who came and opened his heart and we rejoiced together'; a Parsee poet, and a Jew of Bosra, with whom he walked at night by the seaside.

Martyn was given a passage in a ship of the East India Company's navy, sent to cruise in the Persian Gulf against marauding Arab pirates from the coast of Oman. He was to act as chaplain to the European part of the crew of the *Benares*.

In his journal and his letters we trace the details of his wanderings.

I quitted India on Lady Day. . . . Smooth and light airs left me at liberty to pursue my studies as uninterruptedly as if I were on shore; and more so, as my companions in the great cabin, being sufficient company for each other, and studious and taciturn withal, seldom break my repose. Every day, all day long, I Hebraize. . . . On the morning of Easter we saw the land of Mekran in Persia.

You will be happy to know that the murderous pirates against whom we were sent, having received notice of our approach, are all got out of the way, so that I am no longer liable to be shot in a battle, or to decapitation after it.

On the Sunday after Easter the *Benares* put into the cove of Muscat for water before pursuing her way up the Gulf to Bushire, and Henry Martyn set foot in Arabia, a land, he said, of 'burning, barren rocks.'

The cove was stifling. Sleep was impossible during the hot nights in shelter of the rocks. But Martyn was about his business.

The Arab soldier and his slave came on board to take leave. They asked to see the Gospel. The instant I gave them a copy in Arabic, the poor boy began to read, and carried it off as a great prize.

The *Benares*, having warped out of the stifling cove, was tossed about for days by a north-wester, the more violent of the two prevailing winds that rush up or down the great funnel of the Gulf. On 21st May she came to Bushire, and Henry Martyn landed in Persia at that dilapidated little port.

He came into its steamy heat at the hottest season of the year.

We were hospitably received by the acting Resident. In the evening I walked out by the seaside to recollect myself, to review the past and to look forward to the future.

He at once ordered a Persian costume for travel in the interior, and while it was in making set himself, except when prostrated with headache by the heat of the city, to find out Persian and Arabic opinion on translations of the New Testament.

Learned Mohammedan Arabs enjoyed Sabat's Arabic:

I showed Hosyn, an Arab, the most learned man here, a passage in the New Testament, according to the four versions of Erpenius, English, Polyglot and Sabat. He condemned the

three first, but said immediately of Sabat's, 'This is good, very good.' He read out a chapter in fine style; in short, he gave it unqualified commendation.

But learned Persians were not equally pleased with Sabat's work in their language. Already his Persian friend in Bombay had criticized it:

When I told him the translator was an Arab who had lived ten years in Persia, he said, an Arab if he live there twenty years, will never speak Persian well.

So the great task remained yet to be done, and Henry Martyn, plunging into Persia, was determined not to come forth again till he brought with him such a version as in all its niceties could satisfy the sensitive Persian ear.

On the night of 30th May, 1811, his caravan wound through the sleeping port between blind walls of mud or crumbling stone and set its face towards the distant hills. Martyn had grown a moustache during the voyage; he now 'put off the European' and mounted his riding pony in baggy blue trousers and red boots, a conical cap of Astrakhan and a flowing coat. An Armenian servant followed him on a mule and another mule carried his books. For safety they joined a caravan of about thirty beasts carrying baggage to Sir Gore Ouseley, the British Ambassador, then temporarily at Shiraz. In that city of poets and lettered men, Martyn could best pursue his object.

They travelled by night, for the heat of day in early June would be intolerable. As they filed out of Bushire on to the sandy plain that stretched for ninety miles between them and the hills that lift the Persian plateau, Martyn felt all the romance of the first starlight journey with a caravan.

When we began to flag and grow sleepy and the kafila was pretty quiet, one of the muleteers on foot began to sing. He sang with a voice so plaintive, that it was impossible not to have one's attention arrested. At the end of the first tune he paused, and nothing was heard but the tinkling of the bells

attached to the necks of the mules; every voice was hushed. The first line was enough for me. . . . The following is perhaps the true translation:

*Think not that e'er my heart can dwell
Contented far from thee;
How can the fresh-caught nightingale
Enjoy tranquillity?*

*Forsake not then thy friend for aught
That slanderous tongues can say;
The heart that fixes where it ought,
No power can rend away.*

Day caught them still on that sweltering plain. And Martyn, who had almost forgotten it, was forced to remember for once that he was a sick man.

At sunrise we came to our ground at Ahmeda, six parasangs, and pitched our little tent under a tree: it was the only shelter we could get. At first the heat was not greater than we had felt it in India, but it soon became so intense as to be quite alarming. When the thermometer was above 112° , fever heat, I began to lose my strength fast; at last it became quite intolerable. I wrapped myself up in a blanket and all the warm covering I could get to defend myself from the external air; by which means the moisture was kept a little longer upon the body.

But the thermometer still rising, and the moisture of the body being quite exhausted, I grew restless and thought I should have lost my senses. The thermometer at last stood at 126° At last the fierce sun retired, and I crept out more dead than alive. It was then a difficulty how I could proceed on my journey. . . . However, while they were loading the mules, I got an hour's sleep, and set out, the muleteers leading my horse.

So they rode on through the coolness of another night, and when daybreak again found them on the unshielded plain they made their preparations.

I got a tattie made of the branches of the date-tree, and a Persian peasant to water it; by this means the thermometer

did not rise above 114° . But what completely secured me from the heat was a large wet towel, which I wrapped round my head and body, muffling up the lower part in clothes.

The next day brought them to the bottom of the mountain wall among pits of black naphtha.

We arrived at the foot of the mountains, at a place where we seemed to have discovered one of Nature's ulcers. A strong suffocating smell of naphtha announced something more than ordinarily foul in the neighbourhood. We saw a river:—what flowed in it, it seemed difficult to say, whether it were water or green oil; it scarcely moved, and the stones which it laved it left of a greyish colour, as if its foul touch had given them the leprosy.

Our place of encampment this day was a grove of date-trees, where the atmosphere, at sunrise, was ten times hotter than the ambient air. I threw myself down on the burning ground and slept; when the tent came up I awoke, as usual, in a burning fever.

And now, after three nights in the saddle, and three sleepless days of fever, they began to climb the mountain ladder to the Persian plateau.

At nine in the evening we decamped. The ground and air were so insufferably hot that I could not travel without a wet towel round my face and neck. This night, for the first time, we began to ascend the mountains.

There was nothing to mark the road but the rocks being a little more worn in one place than in another. Sometimes my horse, which led the way, stopped as if to consider about the way: for myself I could not guess.

He gave his horse the rein, and rode on drunken with sleep, along paths that hung over dizzy precipices, and up tracks where the travellers behind cower with the sense that the mules must fall back headlong on the hindmost.

My sleepiness and fatigue rendered me insensible to everything around me. At last we emerged *superas ad auras*, not on the top of a mountain to go down again, but to a plain, or upper world.

The first rung of the great ladder was mounted. 'We rode briskly over the plain, breathing a purer air, and soon came in sight of a fair edifice, built by the king of the country for the refreshment of pilgrims.' Here the thermometer was 110° , tempered for them, however, by a load of ice bought from a mountaineer on his way down to the coastal plain.

Next night they climbed the second rung of that great ladder.

'We ascended another range of mountains and passed over a plain where the cold was so piercing that with all the clothes we could muster we were shivering.' They rode on till eight in the morning through country where mountain was heaped on mountain and stone piled on stone as though in some battle of the elder giants. When Martyn arrived at Kaziroon, 'there seemed to be a fire within my head, my skin like a cinder and the pulse violent.' Here he lay all day in a summer house in a cypress garden still too feverish for sleep, stretching out a burning hand to dip it in water.

So they made two more great ascents, climbing the rugged hills crowned with the greyish green of the wild almond into a cooler air. On the last night of that climb 'the cold was very severe; for fear of falling off from sleep and numbness I walked a good part of the way.' And now at last they found a place of rest, never forgotten by any traveller who has made that ride.

We pitched our tent in the vale of Dustarjan, near a crystal stream, on the banks of which we observed the clover and golden cup: the whole valley was one green field, in which large herds of cattle were browsing. The temperature was about that of spring in England. Here a few hours' sleep recovered me in some degree from the stupidity in which I had been for some days. I awoke with a light heart and said, 'He maketh us to lie down in the green pastures and leadeth us beside the still waters.'

There were two more nights of travel before Martyn

reached his goal, 'gasping for life under the double pressure of an inward fire and an outward burning sun.'¹

Sleepiness my old companion and enemy again overtook me. I was in perpetual danger of falling off my horse, till at last I pushed on to a considerable distance, planted my back against a wall, and slept I know not how long till the good muleteer came up and gently waked me.

On Sunday, 9th June, they reached Shiraz the many-gated, set white upon her plain. They halted in a garden outside the walls, and next day rode in through the blind narrow streets to the house of a leading citizen, Jaffir Ali Khan, to whom Martyn had letters bearing the magic signature of Malcolm.

The house was thrown open to him.

After the long and tedious ceremony of coffee and pipes, breakfast made its appearance on two large trays: curry, pilaws, various sweets cooled with snow and perfumed with rose-water, were served in great profusion in China plates and basins, a few wooden spoons beautifully carved; but being in a Persian dress, and on the ground, I thought it high time to throw off the European, and so ate with my hands.

The rich and learned Jaffir placed a room at Martyn's disposal, and here he unpacked such books as he had. His host had been once 'a great sayer of prayers,' but now devoted himself to the pleasures of wealth and literature, excursions to gardens beside living streams, and the company of poets.

Jaffir Ali Khan heard with the interest of a lettered man of his visitor's anxiety for a true and beautiful translation of the Gospel, and he introduced a brother-in-law who spoke 'the purest dialect of the Persian' and offered his assistance in making a new version. 'It was an offer I could not refuse,' said Martyn, and he at once prepared for months of virtual solitude, 'entrenched in one of Persia's valleys' till the great task should be done.

¹ Sir Robert Ker Porter, *Travels*, I. p. 687.

CHAPTER XIII

A YEAR AMONG THE DOCTORS

HENRY MARTYN, 'wearing agreeably to custom a pair of red cloth stockings with green high-heeled shoes,' went to the palace where a hundred fountains played, and made his bow to the Prince-Governor of Shiraz, in whose city he was now a guest.

He was to live for a year (1811-12) in that yet mediæval Shiraz where the Prince-Governor was an autocrat tyrant ordering the bastinado, where city gates were closed at sunset, where the Vizier sent a train of mules laden with fruit as a compliment to the stranger, and where men, sipping sherbet cooled with snow, recited the verses of Sadi or of Hafiz.

Martyn, son of another age and world, knew in Shiraz the loneliness of a crowd.

After much deliberation [he wrote to David Brown] I have determined to remain here six months. From all that I can collect there appears no probability of our ever having a good translation made out of Persia. The men of Shiraz propose to translate the New Testament with me. Can I refuse to stay?

Behold me, therefore, in the Athens of Fars, the haunt of the Persian man. Beneath are the ashes of Hafiz and Sadi; above, green gardens and running waters, roses and nightingales. How gladly would I give Shiraz for Aldeen!

Now, good Sir, seeing that I am to remain six months in captivity, comfort me with a letter now and then.

The story of that sojourn has to be pieced together from Martyn's letters and journal. Letter after letter he sent home by caravan to the coast or by Tartar courier to Constantinople, but none yet reached him from Corn-

wall, and the Indian packets also were mysteriously delayed.

Since ten months [he told Lydia] I have heard nothing of any one person whom I love. I read your letters incessantly, and try to find out something new, as I generally do, but I begin to look with pain at the distant date of the last. . . . I try to live on from day to day happy in His love and care.

He wrote to Lydia, to David Brown and to Corrie long letters that have to be searched before they yield those little details which give the picture of daily life. For the letters are swallowed up with the one supreme interest of his task.

The *Journal* too, once full of minute and delicate studies in conscience, becomes now a notebook of the progress of translation and of solitary witness to the faith. There are no longer breathings after Brainerd; the man stands alone with Christ. The Martyn that moves among the doctors of Shiraz is clothed with an almost magical calm, with the serenity of a man who has forgotten himself in the service of a Greater.

The least of His works is refreshing to look at. A dried leaf or a straw makes me feel myself in good company. . . . If I live to complete the Persian New Testament, my life after that will be of less importance. But whether life or death be mine, may Christ be magnified in me. If He has work for me to do I cannot die.

He set up housekeeping in the room allotted to him by his host, with his talkative Armenian servant to do the foraging.

Victuals are cheap enough . . . such a country for fruit I had no conception of. I have a fine horse which I bought for less than a hundred rupees, on which I ride every morning round the walls. My vain servant Zechariah, anxious that his master should appear like an ameer, furnished the horse with a saddle, or rather a pillion which fairly covers his whole back; it has all the colours of the rainbow, but yellow is

predominant, and from it hang down four large tassels also yellow. But all my finery does not defend me from the boys. Some cry out 'Ho! Russ!' others cry out 'Feringhee!' One day a brickbat was flung at me and hit me in the hip. They continued throwing stones at me every day until the Governor sent an order to all the gates that if anyone insulted me he should be bastinadoed, and the next day came himself in state to pay me a visit.

Most of the day I am about the translation. I am so incessantly occupied with visitors and my work that I have hardly a moment for myself. Even from these Mohammedans I hear remarks that do me good; today for instance my assistant observed, 'How He loved those twelve persons.' 'Yes,' said I, 'and not those twelve only.'

Imagine a pale person seated on a Persian carpet, in a room without table or chair, with a pair of formidable mustachios, and habited as a Persian, and you see me. I go on as usual singing hymns at night over my milk and water, for tea I have none though I much want it. I am with you in spirit almost every evening.

The long covered bazaar of Shiraz ('like Exeter Change') was soon seething with rumour about the new foreigner who lodged with the wealthy and respected Jaffir Ali Khan, and who carried letters from that prince of men, the liberal Malcolm Sahib. Those who had spoken with Martyn called him a man of God and a doctor of religion. 'A beardless boy,' said others, 'how should he know anything of the faith?' And to settle the question, the learned of Shiraz came one by one to sip coffee and break a lance with the stranger. They never found him inaccessible. His list of visitors, as in all places where he dwelt, was very various.

The prince's secretary who is considered to be the best prose-writer in Shiraz called upon us.

Two young men from the college, full of zeal and logic, came this morning to try me with hard questions.

Before I had taken my breakfast the younger of the youths came, and forced me into a conversation. As soon as he heard

the word 'Father' in the translation used for 'God,' he laughed and went away.

Abdulghanee the Jew Mahometan came to prove that he had found Mahomet in the Pentateuch. . . . He concluded by saying that he must come every day and either make me a Mussulman or become himself a Christian.

Another day it was a Persian General who came out of respect to a friend of Malcolm Sahib, or an Armenian priest who called to see his brother of the west, or the 'chief of a tribe which consists of twenty thousand families,' or an Indian moonshee who recited his own verses while the Persians secretly derided his foreign accent.

The interviews were apt to terminate in deadlock, as host and visitor reached one crucial point.

The Moollah Aga Mahommed Hasan, a very sensible, candid man, asked a good deal about the European philosophy, particularly what we did in metaphysics. He has nothing to find fault with in Christianity, except the Divinity of Christ. It is this doctrine that exposes me to the contempt of the learned Mahometans.

Martyn's serenity, his friends soon learnt, was never the calm of an unfeeling deadness. They could touch him to the quick by anything that concerned the honour of his Lord.

Mirza Seid Ali told me of a distich made by his friend in honour of a victory over the Russians. The sentiment was that Prince Abbas Mirza had killed so many Christians that Christ from the fourth heaven took hold of Mahomet's skirt to entreat him to desist. I was cut to the soul at this blasphemy. Mirza Seid Ali perceived that I was considerably disordered and asked what it was that was so offensive? I told him that 'I could not endure existence if Jesus was not glorified; it would be hell to me, if He were to be always thus dishonoured.' He was astonished and again asked 'Why?' 'If any one pluck out your eyes,' I replied, 'there is no saying *why* you feel pain;—it is feeling. It is because I am one with Christ that I am thus dreadfully wounded.'

In spite of the interruptions of garrulous callers, the work went on apace. Sabat's translation, with its fondness for fine words, was found almost useless.

The king has signified that it is his wish that as little Arabic as possible may be employed in the papers presented to him. So that simple Persian is likely to become more and more fashionable. This is a change favourable certainly to our glorious cause. To the poor the Gospel will be preached. We began our work with the Gospel of St John, and five chapters are put out of hand. It is likely to be the simplest thing imaginable; and I daresay the pedantic Arab will turn up his nose at it; but what the men of Shiraz approve, who can gainsay?

During August Martyn's host, 'to relieve the tedium of living always in a walled town,' pitched a tent for him in a garden in the suburbs, where he found tranquillity, living amidst clusters of grapes by a clear stream.' Here under an orange tree, with greater freedom from interruption, he sat with Mirza Seid Ali hour after hour at the translation, until the cold at night drove him back to the shelter of the city.

During the month of Ramadan, when orthodox Muslims fast by day and feast by night, Martyn was surprised by a visit from Mirza Ali Casim a renowned Sufi teacher. He conformed outwardly to Islam so far as was necessary to avoid shame and punishment; but at heart he was a rebel, and he came now to ask Martyn for wine, secure that in the Christian's room he would not be betrayed for breaking the regulations he despised.

'I plied him with questions innumerable,' wrote Martyn, 'but the weary old man had no heart for discussion.'

Laying aside his turban, he put on his nightcap and soon fell asleep upon the carpet. Whilst he lay there, his disciples came, but would not believe when I told them who was there, till they came and saw the sage asleep. When he awoke, they came in, and seated themselves at the greatest possible distance, and were all as still as a church.

So the poor old man awoke from his brief comfort of wine and sleep to find himself once more a saintly demi-god. 'The real state of this man seems to be despair,' wrote Martyn. 'Poor soul, he is sadly bewildered.'

When winter came and the translators wrapped sheepskins round them as they sat at work, Martyn made his Christmas feast, and bade to it his brethren of the Armenian Church, ignorant and persecuted, sewing patches on to their new coats for fear they should be taken from them by Muslim neighbours. He also bade the Sufi sage and all his following to celebrate the birth of One whom wise men from the east had worshipped. 'God will guide whom He will,' the poor old man was heard to mutter into his snowy beard; but not another word did he vouchsafe at that strange Christmas feast.

So Martyn reached out towards friendship with these heretics and mystics, laying before them all that he had, even his very soul. 'I am sometimes led on by the Persians,' he said, 'to tell them all I know of the very recesses of the sanctuary, and these are the things that interest them.'

But long before Christmas time he had awakened hostility amongst the orthodox, and found himself called on to defend the faith before the doctors of Persian Islam. 'I am in the midst of enemies,' he wrote, 'who argue against the truth with uncommon subtlety.'

So great was the stir in the city from the presence of the young Frankish teacher that the authorities felt it necessary to assert the true and only faith.

A defence of Islam was prepared, which in the eyes of the learned of Shiraz outweighed all former apologies—'a book which is to silence me for ever,' Martyn said. This was the work of Mirza Ibrahim, a majestic and benevolent old man, 'Preceptor of all the mullahs.'

When this treatise was put into Martyn's hands there fell to him, single-handed and almost without books, the task as knight of Christ of meeting the champion of Persian theology. He replied in a tract, the first of a

series, in which he shows an astonishing mastery of the whole controversy, and in which he and his opponent throughout preserved high courtesy.¹

But though Martyn and Mirza Ibrahim might be chivalrous opponents, there were other less courtly antagonists.

As there is nothing at all in this dull place to take the attention of the people, no trade, manufactures or news, every event at all novel is interesting to them. You may conceive therefore what a sensation was produced. Before five people had seen what I wrote, defences of Islam swarmed into being from all the Moulwee maggots of the place, but the more judicious men were ashamed to let me see them.

One of the royal princes was heard to growl that the proper reply to Martyn's writings was the sword. But he remained serene and never shirked encounters where he might be called on to confess his faith. Soon all Shiraz was talking of a dinner party at which the great Professor of Canon Law himself had disputed with the stranger.

He invited us to dinner. About eight o'clock at night we went. [October had come and with it the Moslem month of Ramadan, when eating by day is forbidden.] We entered a fine court, where was a pond, and by the side of it a platform eight feet high, covered with carpets. Here sat the Moojtahid in state. The Professor seated Seid Ali on his right hand and me on his left. The swarthy obesity of the little personage led me to suppose that he had paid more attention to cooking than to science. But when he began to speak, I saw reason enough for his being so much admired. The substance of his speech was flimsy enough; but he spoke with uncommon fluency and clearness. He talked for a full hour about the soul. At length after clearing his way for miles around, he said, that philosophers had proved that a single being could produce but a single being; that the first thing God had created was *Wisdom*. . . .

¹ The whole controversy was preserved in English, and published by Dr Lee, the Cambridge Professor of Arabic, after Martyn's death.

And so on—a winding discourse which Martyn, as he sat in silence on the many-coloured carpet, had no desire to call in question, being anxious for no useless skirmishes among outworks.

The Professor at the close of one of his long speeches said to me, 'You see how much there is to be said on these subjects; several visits will be necessary; we must come to the point by degrees.' Perceiving how much he dreaded a close discussion, I did not mean to hurry him, but let him talk on.

But other listeners were anxious for the clash of arms, and urged Martyn to bring the Professor to grips. He did at length respectfully urge the great lawyer to oblige the company with 'something about Islam,' and so drew forth a few magisterial statements.

'The Jesus we acknowledge,' said he with a contemptuous smile, 'is one who bore testimony to Muhammad, not your Jesus whom you call God.'

After this the Koran was mentioned, but as the company began to thin and the great man had not a sufficient audience, he did not seem to think it worth while to notice my objections.

It was midnight when dinner was brought in: it was a sullen meal. The great man was silent; and I was sleepy.

So quite alone he witnessed to the faith. There is a story, perhaps apocryphal,¹ of Martyn sitting under an awning in the Vizier's courtyard to witness the Passion Play of the death of Hussein. The drama lasted ten days and was played before an audience that sobbed aloud. The story has it that when a scene was reached in which

¹ Yet Martyn several times did go to martyr-plays in Shiraz, and we know that he went to the play at the Vizier's in January 1812. Curiously enough, as E. G. Browne was sitting in a Persian house in 1892, his host, speaking of a similar part allotted to a Frankish ambassador in some recent martyr-plays, said, 'How I wish you had been here a little earlier, for then we could have borrowed your hats and clothes for the Firangis, and indeed you might even have taught us some words of your language to put in the mouths of the actors who personated them.'—E. G. Browne, *A Year Among the Persians*.

a Frankish ambassador was made to step forward and implore pardon for the victims, the actor knew no Frankish words to say except a few round English curses picked up from travellers. Martyn, stung to the heart at this, leapt on to the primitive stage, and seizing the actor, taught him to say the Lord's Prayer.

On 24th February, 1812, the New Testament was finished. Martyn waited for nothing but the scribing of some gorgeous copies for the hands of Persian royalty, before setting out once more on pilgrimage. They could hardly let him go. They took him out to a garden and seated him on a bed of roses, and made him read them the Bible history for hours at a time. 'Their love seemed to increase,' he said, as the time of his departure drew near.

Just before he quitted Shiraz, a young man, bred as a doctor of Islam, came begging for an interview. He confessed that he had visited Martyn many times before with the other doctors to heap scorn on the teacher of a despised sect, but at every interview he had found his attitude changing. Martyn's unfailing forbearance to his violence put him to shame, and his calm reasoning laid bare sophistries. At last Muhammad Rahim found himself convinced that the 'beardless boy' was right. Then for shame and fear he had kept away from his presence for months. But now he heard that the teacher was going, and he came at last to make confession of his belief. Martyn put into his hands that day a copy of the Book, a Persian New Testament that became his lifelong companion. Years afterwards Muhammad Rahim confessed his conversion to a Christian traveller, and showed the book that was his greatest treasure. On one of the blank leaves was written, 'There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.—HENRY MARTYN.'

CHAPTER XIV

THE TRAVELLER

IN that yet mediæval Persia, the aspiring poet or man of letters still laid his book before the Shah. Fateh Ali Shah,¹ ruler of Persia, over-lord of Georgia and Kurdistan, was, as he sat blazing with jewels before a prostrate court, the fountain of taste and the judge of letters for his kingdom. It needed but a pronouncement of praise in his hollow rolling voice, and the fortunes of a volume were made.

Henry Martyn, seeing through Persian eyes, determined to gain for the New Testament the respect yielded to a book approved at court.

As his translation work drew to a close he set scribes preparing two volumes of exquisite penmanship for the Shah and for his heir, Prince Abbas Mirza, 'the wisest of the princes.' The scribes began work in November 1811. They brought him the finished volumes in May 1812, three months after the translator's work was done. Martyn wrapped up the costly manuscripts uncorrected. He had none like-minded whom he could put in charge of the precious volumes, and he was determined to lay the books himself in the royal hands, correcting them as he travelled. For he knew that he was a sick man. He must race disease if he desired to see the Book on its way. A long dispute with a Sufi doctor would leave him still with a raw pit of pain where his breath came and went.

He had copies ready for the press. Four were sent by his direction to India that his friends at Serampore might

¹ 1798-1836.

print his translation.¹ Other copies he carried with him on his wanderings, intending, if he lived, to pass them on to some press in the west, perhaps at his own university of Cambridge. He spent his last hours at Shiraz with his fellow-translator in giving instructions for the care and delivery of the Book in case of his own death.

That done, a little before the closing of the gates at sunset on 11th May, 1812, he left Shiraz and joined a caravan outside the walls, starting that night to ride across the great Persian plateau from south to north.

He was riding as servant of the Book to Tabriz where Sir Gore Ouseley lived; for he could be introduced into the jewelled presence of the Shah only by the ambassador who represented his nation.

The air of the uplands was cool enough for day travelling; indeed on that high plateau it grew cold, even in May: 'hoar-frost, and ice on the pools. The highest land between the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea.' At night they shuddered in open caravanserais that seemed to let in wind and rain alike. Martyn after a day's ride drew out of its wrappings the precious volume prepared for the Prince, and sat late into the night in some leaky hovel, poring over the correction of his scribe's exquisite Persian lettering.

After twelve days of riding they came across the poppy fields to Isfahan, a city of domes and minarets and pigeon towers, seen from far across the plain. Martyn had for companion in the caravan another Englishman travelling also to Tabriz to join Sir Gore Ouseley's suite. Consequently they were lodged as foreigners of mark in one of the palaces of the Shah. Here they paused a week and there was time for Martyn to seek out the Armenians, of whose ancient and desolate Church he was always a lover, and with whom he spent many hours.

¹ The manuscript arrived safely, but not till 1814. It was published at Calcutta in 1816. Martyn's friend Mirza Seid Ali was actually sent for from Shiraz that he might see it through the press.

On the first night of June the caravan left Isfahan, its plane trees and its fountains, its niggardly merchants and its dreams of bygone glory. 'Soon after midnight we mounted our horses. It was a mild moonlight night and a nightingale filled the whole valley with his notes. Our way was along lanes, a murmuring rivulet accompanied us till it was lost in a lake.'

At daylight they rode out of these enchanted scenes on to the great plain of Kashan where fat melons grow in bare sand, and far away against the blue stands up a snowy mountain wall, the northern barrier of the Persian land.

After eight days they came to Teheran, the half-ambitious, half-squalid city of modern royalty, behind walls of unbaked clay. They reached those walls two hours before sunrise, and all the twelve gates were shut. 'I spread my bed upon the high road, and slept till the gates were open.'

Then came the first hitch in Martyn's plans. No muleteers could be found willing to travel to Tabriz, where lay the British ambassador who would introduce him and his book into the royal presence. It meant delay. And Martyn in 1812 could not brook delay. While life was yet in him he must press on with the Book. He held letters of introduction to the Shah's Vizier. Better than lose the time he could not spare, should he not travel alone to the Shah's summer camping ground, a night's journey outside the city, and ask the Prime Minister himself to bring him to the royal presence?

He ventured. He rode out of Teheran alone with his servant, and found the Vizier lying ill on the veranda of the Shah's tent of audience. Only that many-coloured tent curtain hung between Martyn and his goal. The Vizier had two royal secretaries by his couch.

They took very little notice, not rising when I sat down, as their custom is to all who sit with them; nor offering me a water-pipe. The premier asked how many languages I under-

stood; whether I spoke French; where I was educated; whether I understood astronomy and geography, and then observed to the others that I spoke good Persian.

But Martyn had to betake himself to the caravanserai that night, no nearer to the jewelled figure in the audience tent, fed with words and offered no courtous hospitality. The Vizier had no intention of becoming sponsor for a lonely stranger. Martyn spent the evening on the roof of the inn, sharing the mat of a poor travelling merchant.

Three days later he attended the Vizier's levee bearing the precious Book. All eyes were turned on the solitary Frank. In that court where verbal swordsmanship was the arts of arts, a discussion was inevitable, but Martyn knew that an angry discussion would ruin his chance of seeing the face of the Shah.

He could not prevent the very clash that he dreaded. 'There was a most intemperate and clamorous controversy kept up for an hour or two; eight or ten on one side and myself on the other.' He came unfriended; the Vizier encouraged the attack, and the veneer of polish was broken as they set upon him.

Their vulgarity in interrupting me in the middle of a speech; their utter ignorance of the nature of an argument; their impudent assertions about the law and the gospel, neither of which they had ever seen in their lives, moved my indignation a little.

His indignation, but not his fear. This Martyn seems to have forgotten how to fear. The Vizier who had at first set them by the ears came up at last to the angry group, stilled the hubbub and put to Martyn before them all a crucial question. He challenged the stranger to recite the Muslim creed. 'Say God is God and Mohammed is the Prophet of God.'

It was an electric moment, the whole court at attention.

I said, 'God is God' but added, instead of 'Mahomet is the prophet of God,' 'and Jesus is the Son of God.'

They all rose up as if they would have torn him in pieces, snarling out one of the classic fighting cries of the Muslim world, 'He is neither begotten nor begets.' 'What will you say when your tongue is burnt out for this blasphemy?'

He heard them in silence.

My book which I had brought expecting to present it to the king lay before Mizra Shufi, the Vizier. As they all rose up after him to go, some to the king and some away, I was afraid they would trample on the book; so I went in among them to take it up, and wrapped it in a towel before them; while they looked at it and me with supreme contempt.

I walked away alone to my tent to pass the rest of the day in heat and dirt.

A message followed him from the Vizier refusing to present him to the Shah and referring him to his own ambassador.

'Disappointed of my object in coming to the camp,' he says, 'I lost no time in leaving it.' He now set off for Tabriz, travelling for the first nine days along a road where the Shah himself was soon to pass on his way to Sultanieh. The north wind from the Caspian blew over the mountains, and even at mid-day in June the air was cool. The fresh tang of the breeze carried Martyn home; he fancied himself trudging the roads near Cambridge with a friend at his side, or following a path by the Cornish shore with one beloved companion.

While passing over the plain, mostly on foot, I had them all in my mind, and bore them all in my heart in prayer.

The shadow of the royal progress lay on all the villages.

All along the road where the king is expected, the people are patiently waiting, as for some dreadful disaster: plague, pestilence or famine are nothing to the misery of being subject to the violence and extortion of this rabble soldiery.

When they had passed the Shah's camping ground at Sultanieh they came into a new world, a country that

has been a meeting place of the races of mankind. The speech around them began to change from Persian to Turkish, and the caravanserais were the halting place of men whose mules or camels followed the trade routes of the ancient world from east to west.

We found large bales of cotton brought by merchants from Teheran, intended for Turkey. There were also two Tartar merchants, natives of Astrachan, who had brought iron and tea for sale. They wished to know whether we wanted tea of Cathay.

Here in outlandish parts, Martyn fell sick. After five days of fever June 29th was a day of acute pain.

I was almost frantic. I endeavoured to keep in mind all that was friendly; a friendly Lord presiding; and nothing exercising me but what would show itself at last friendly.

So, shivering or burning by turns and almost light-headed, he reached the outer bulwarks of the mountains that guard Persia on the north, 'a most natural boundary it is.' His horse threaded his way for him through the boulders, for Martyn in high fever could not make his brain obey him, but travelled bewildered through the past, wandering in 'happy scenes in India or England.' They lost him once; for riding on ahead he had come to a bridge, and scarce knowing what he did, left his horse and crept under the shadow of the arch, where he sat with two camel-drivers, happy to be still and cool. The caravan passed over the bridge without the sick man's observation, and a fellow-traveller, coming back to search for him, found at first only a grazing horse and feared the worst.

So they passed poor hill villages and came out to the pure clean air, the lovely natural pastures and the churlish shepherds of Azerbaijan. By some miracle Martyn in 'fever which nearly deprived me of reason' still sat his horse.

At last, as the dawn of 7th July shone coldly on the Blue Mosque and the Citadel, he reached the gate of Tabriz, and 'feebly asked for a man to show me the way to the ambassador's.' He had been two months on the road when Sir Gore Ouseley and his lady received him at the point of death.

They did all that they could. The violence of the fever they could not allay for another fortnight, but they 'administered bark' and tended him as if he were a son. As he lay there under their kind hands, the sick man knew that he had no more strength to travel, as he had longed, to Damascus, to Baghdad, and into the heart of Arabia to search for ancient versions and perfect the Arabic New Testament. His task seemed dropping from his hands. Sir Gore Ouseley told him that he was too ill to see the Shah or the Prince, and doubtless dreaded another collision between Martyn and the mullahs of the court. But he comforted his guest with the promise that he would give every possible éclat to the Book by presenting it himself. The good ambassador did more. He had extra copies made for high officials of open mind, who might speak well of the Book to the potentate. When at length the New Testament reached the royal hands, the Shah was graciousness itself.

In truth [said the royal letter of thanks to the ambassador] through the learned and unremitting exertions of the Reverend Henry Martyn it has been translated in a style most befitting sacred books, that is in an easy and simple diction. . . . The whole of the New Testament is completed in a most excellent manner, a source of pleasure to our enlightened and august mind.

If it please the most merciful God we shall command the Select Servants who are admitted to our presence, to read to us the above-mentioned book from the beginning to the end.

Sir Gore Ouseley did yet more. He carried a copy with him to St Petersburg, and there, at the instigation of a Russian prince, the Bible Society printed the Persian

Book, with the British ambassador as volunteer proof-reader. Sir Gore Ouseley's Russian edition came into the world in the year of Waterloo, while the sister edition in Calcutta was still struggling through the press.

So Martyn's task passed into other hands, and he lying sick almost to death in a mansion of Tabriz saw nothing more within his strength in the east. The ambassador had handed him a letter; at last, after more than eighteen months, a letter from Lydia. To her and to Cornwall the sick man turned. Would strength be granted him to reach her? Might he not carry home the New Testament, to be printed perhaps in his own Cambridge? If he could only reach Lydia, surely he would be well enough with her to start for more service in the east.

Made an extraordinary effort and, as a Tartar was going off instantly to Constantinople, wrote letters to Mr Grant for permission to come to England, and to Mr Simeon and Lydia informing them of it.

We have both those letters written by the hand of a man who tells his correspondent that he has not the strength to search his papers for the last home letters.

'I have applied for leave to come to England on furlough; a measure you will disapprove,' so he tells Simeon, his feverish brain remembering the relentless standards of work in the Cambridge parish and the brisk upright figure of the leader who never spared himself. 'But you would not were you to see the pitiable condition to which I am reduced.' A Henry Martyn's plea against some fancied charge of idleness must have been hard reading to his friend. Then the old passion seizes the sick man, and the pen flies in his feverish hand as he turns to the beloved work and warns Simeon about some publication mooted in Cambridge for Muslim readers. Let it not go to press until it has been approved by men who know the east and know eastern ways of seeing, imagining and

reasoning. He tells of the last treatise he had written in Shiraz and, with a rare note of satisfaction in any work of his own, records his hope that 'there is not a single Europeanism in the whole of it.'

But I am exhausted; pray for me, beloved brother, and believe that I am, as long as life and recollection last, yours affectionately,
H. MARTYN.

To Lydia, lest she should dwell on his sickness, he writes of his spiritual solace; 'The love of God never appeared more clear, more sweet, more strong.' Then, lest she should build on his coming, he adds, 'I must faithfully tell you that the probability of my reaching England alive is but small.'

The Tartar courier galloped off with the letters and the sick man lay back exhausted. Nothing was left him to do, but to gather strength for the homeward journey.

A month later, 'a mere skeleton' after two months of fever, he sat up in a chair and wrote his will 'with a strong hand.'

August 21st-31st. Making preparations for my journey to Constantinople, a route recommended to me by Sir Gore as safer, and one in which he could give me letters of recommendation to two Turkish governors.

On 2nd September, 1812, he set out with a little party of guides and servants, while the ambassador and his lady measured with doubtful eyes the strength of the haggard convalescent against fifteen hundred miles of hardship.

At sunset we left the western gate of Tabriz behind us. The plain towards the west and south-west stretches away to an immense distance bounded by mountains so remote as to appear from their soft blue to blend with the skies.

He 'ambled on' with the keen sense of the convalescent for the beauty and freedom of the outside world, gazing

at 'the distant hills with gratitude and joy.' His way through Azerbaijan and Armenia always tending westward was the 'Royal Road' of ancient Persia along which the service of the Great King passed from Susa to the west. It was marked by a post-station built of mud bricks. Here men and beasts fared much alike as to lodgings.

In cities where Martyn had letters of introduction he might hire a room from a citizen.

I was led from street to street till at last I was lodged in a wash-house belonging to a great man, a corner of which was cleared out for me.

A room secured, at the end of the day's hard riding there were the perennial discomforts of such travel: mosquitoes and lice, 'the smell of the stable so strong that I was quite unwell,' and the incessant crowding and chatter of people who could not or would not understand his desire to rest alone. It was always Martyn, too, who must be the one to wake at midnight and rouse his party and stand urgent over them as they dawdled round the baggage sleepy and loth to start.

The travelling was hard even for a hale man. He crossed the Araxes; he left great Ararat upon his left; he passed through a rich land of streams where a precious trunk full of books was dropped and soaked, and he had a midnight fire built to dry them. He spent nights in rooms built over or beside the family stable for the sake of the warmth from the beasts in winter, but now in September overpowering in heat and stench; and he rode on, 'thinking of a Hebrew letter,' and so 'perceiving little of the tediousness of the way.'

So he came to Erivan, and laid the ambassador's letter before a provincial governor to whom his distant overlord, the Shah, seemed but a shadowy personage.

I was summoned to his presence. He at first took no notice of me, but continued reading his Koran. After a compliment or two, he resumed his devotions. The next ceremony was to

exchange a rich shawl dress for a still richer pelisse on pretence of its being cold. The next display was to call for his physician, who after respectfully feeling his pulse stood on one side.

Having sufficiently impressed the thin, sick traveller with his greatness, he called a secretary to pick up from the floor the letter of the British ambassador, and to read it in his august ears. The letter interested him and he grew languidly attentive, but his hopes were set on some grapes and melons cooling before him in a marble fountain, and he sent the saint away, not knowing that he had met a man of God.

On 12th September Martyn left his servants waiting for fresh horses, and rode alone to visit his brothers the Armenian monks at Etchmiazin, the mother-city of their church. He struck up at once a friendship with a young monk of his own age named Serope, 'bold, authoritative and very able,' and full of reforming plans for his Church, 'but then he is not spiritual.' They talked all day. 'When the bell rang for vespers, we went together to the great Church.'

Next day Martyn waited on the Patriarch, who received him on a throne, surrounded by standing monks. 'I told the Patriarch that I was so happy in being here that I could almost be willing to be a monk with them.'

When the young monk who welcomed Martyn had become a silvery-bearded bishop he told a European traveller¹ his impressions of that visit.

He described Martyn to me as being of a very delicate frame . . . a beardless youth, with a countenance beaming with so much benignity as to bespeak an errand of Divine love. Of the affairs of the world he seemed to be so ignorant that Serope was obliged to manage for him respecting his travelling arrangements and money matters. A Tartar was employed to take him to Tokat.

¹ Mr George Fowler.

Serope took Martyn in hand, changed most of his travelling kit, and bought him a sword against the Kurdish robbers.

So he left them with new baggage and a new train, 'a trusty servant from the monastery' carrying his money.

On 19th September they passed from the Persian province of Erivan to the neighbour province of Kars, and so left the domains of the Shah for those of the Sultan of Turkey.

Troubles began.

The headman of the village paid me a visit. He was a young Mussulman and took care of all my Mussulman attendants; but he left my Armenians and me where he found us. I was rather uncomfortably lodged, my room being a thoroughfare for horses, cows, buffaloes and sheep. Almost all the village came to look at me.

Each day there were alarms of Kurdish robbers. Martyn's escort met even poor companies of peasants with suspicion and with pieces cocked. Each trifling incident of the way revealed that one of the company, the Tartar guide named Hassan, was a man with the nature of that soldiery which could plait a crown of thorns for a scourged prisoner.

The Tartar began to show his nature by flogging the baggage-horses with his long whip; but one of the poor beasts presently fell with his load.

Or again:

In this room I should have been very much to my satisfaction had not the Tartar taken part of the same bench. It was evident that the Tartar was the great man here: he took the best place for himself; a dinner of four or five dishes was laid before him. When I asked for eggs they brought me rotten ones.

With a stern vigorous master Hassan might have done good service. With a sick man he showed himself a brute.

Kars was left behind, then Erzerum, but fever was winning the race.

September 29th. We moved to a village where I was attacked with fever and ague.

October 1st. We were out from seven in the morning till eight at night. After sitting a little by the fire I was near fainting from sickness. I learned that the plague was raging at Constantinople and thousands dying every day. The inhabitants of Tocat were flying from their town from the same cause.

October 2nd. Some hours before day I sent to tell the Tartar I was ready, but Hassan was for once riveted to his bed. However, at eight, having got strong horses, he set off at a great rate. He made us gallop as fast as the horses would go to Chifflik, where we arrived at sunset. I was lodged at my request in the stables of the post-house. As soon as it began to grow a little cold the ague came on, then the fever.

In the night Hassan sent to summon me away, but I was quite unable to move. Finding me still in bed at the dawn he began to storm furiously at my detaining him so long; but I quietly let him spend his ire, ate my breakfast and set out at eight. He seemed determined to make up for the delay, for we flew over hill and dale to Sherean,¹ where we changed horses. From thence we travelled all the rest of the day and all night. It rained. The ague came on. There was a village at hand, but Hassan had no mercy. At one in the morning we found two men under a wain with a good fire; I dried my lower extremities, allayed the fever by drinking a good deal of water and went on. The night was pitchy dark so that I could not see the road under my horse's feet. We arrived at the munzil² at break of day. Hassan was in great fear of being arrested here; the governor of the city had vowed to make an example of him for riding to death a horse belonging to a man of this place.

He hurried me away without delay; and galloped furiously towards a village which he said was four hours distant, which

¹ Generally written Sheheran.

² The halting place at the end of each stage of about twenty-five miles.

was all I could undertake in my weak state; but village after village did he pass till, night coming on, I suspected that he was carrying me on to the munzil; so I got off my horse, and sat upon the ground, and told him 'I neither could nor would go any farther.' He stormed, but I was immovable, till, a light appearing at a distance, I mounted and made towards it. He brought in the party, but would not exert himself to get a place for me. Sergius told them I wanted a place in which to be alone. This seemed very offensive to them; 'And why must he be alone?' they asked, attributing this desire of mine to pride, I suppose. Tempted at last by money they brought me to a stable room, and Hassan and a number of others planted themselves there with me. My fever here increased to a violent degree; the heat in my eyes and forehead was so great that the fire almost made me frantic. I entreated that it might be put out, or that I might be carried out of doors. Neither was attended to; my servant, who, from my sitting in that strange way on the ground, believed me delirious, was deaf to all I said. At last I pushed my head in among the luggage and lodged it on the damp ground, and slept.

October 5th. The merciless Hassan hurried me off. The munzil, however, not being distant I reached it without much difficulty. I was pretty well lodged and felt tolerably well till a little after sunset, when the ague came on with a violence I had never before experienced; I felt as if in a palsy, my teeth chattering and my whole frame violently shaken.

Two Persians came to visit him as he lay shivering.

These Persians appear quite brotherly after the Turks. While they pitied me, Hassan sat in perfect indifference, ruminating on the further delay this was likely to occasion. The cold fit continuing two or three hours was followed by a fever, which lasted the whole night and prevented sleep.

October 6th. No horses being to be had, I had an unexpected repose. I sat in the orchard, and thought with sweet comfort and peace of my God; in solitude my Company, my Friend and Comforter. Oh, when shall time give place to eternity! When shall appear the new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness! There shall in no wise enter in any-

thing that defileth: none of that wickedness which has made men worse than wild beasts shall be seen or heard of any more.

There was no later entry in the journal; but he had not come yet to the end of that impossible ride. Day after day they dragged him on, waking him out of feverish sleep to start before the sun.

On 14th October, 1812, Martyn bade his Armenian servant Sergius make a list of his papers and carry them for him to Constantinople. They had ridden him to death, but there is no story of that death-bed. We know that he came at the last 'a young man, wanting still the years of Christ,' to Tokat under its weird pile of castellated hill, a city of the copper-merchants, but then grim with plague. We know too that in fever his mind was always moving among friends in India or in England.

So he came to Tokat, and the mule-bells in the narrow streets jingled in dying ears. Or were they sheep-bells? sheep bells on the moors?

They probably laid him down to die amid the babel of an eastern khan. . . . That everlasting smell of the stable! Why could not the General find a better place for service than the riding school? But then the Lord was born in a stable. A man could worship there. . . . But that raging voice! If only the tormenting flood of words might cease! Was it Sabat or the Tartar? Sons of thunder, both of them. Sons of thunder He called them, yes, and loved them too.

Why that never-ending clatter on the cobbles? Little hurrying feet of donkeys. And people too. Surely so many people were never seen in Truro Street before, and all so beautiful. There was Corrie, what a friend he was! and Sally and Sargent and Lydia. Of course she would come at last. How her face was shining like a star. How all the faces shone with the light of God. . . . Was that an Armenian priest standing at prayer? Simeon had surely come at last with the Bread and Wine. How sweet his

voice grew, like the music in King's Chapel! 'We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.'

'For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ . . .'

Some weeks later an Armenian named Sergius, hot from travel, carried a bundle of papers into the house of Mr Isaac Morier at Constantinople, and said that they came from his master who had died on 16th October, 1812, at Tokat, where the Armenian clergy gave him Christian burial.

CHAPTER XV

THE EXPANDING CIRCLE OF ACTION¹

ONE hundred and forty years have now elapsed since Henry Martyn's premature death in those lonely wastes of Armenia. But his life still speaks to the world with a message as vital and urgent as that proclaimed by his own lips or pen. He belongs to that band of missionary saints, devoured by a consuming zeal, which gave them no rest, but drove them ever onwards to greater endeavours for the furtherance of the kingdom of God.

It was the constraining love of Christ, and the vision of souls eternally lost, which led Henry Martyn to the shores of India. But until his *Journals* were read after his death, few realized how strong was that constraining power, how clear that vision, or how careful had been his preparation for his Master's service. For example, there are constant references in his *Journal* to physical endurance, for the future missionary was determined to 'bring his body into subjection.'

I was pleased with the thought of being alone, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather, and deprived of earthly comforts, thinking I should be a gainer on the whole by having more of the presence of God, and experiencing the power of Christ resting upon me.

He would deliberately expose his body to the cold in winter, walking without an overcoat, or sitting in an unheated room, to harden himself, that he might learn to forgo such comforts while in England so as to be ready for the days when it might be impossible to obtain

¹ This chapter has been specially written for this edition by the Rev. Dr G. C. B. Davies.

them. Later, when on voyage to India, he found that he was looking forward with anticipation to the prospect of some wine at dinner in the evening; he therefore determined to deny himself this pleasure in satisfying a bodily appetite and, instead, to send his portion to the sick, feeling it indeed his duty to do so since their living quarters were cramped, and medical attention inadequate. 'After this,' he wrote, 'though a little heavy, and without any sensible pleasure in religion, I felt a great hardihood of soul, and superiority to all difficulties.' A few days later we find him writing again of his soul's delight in prayer, so that he could wish to pass all his time in communion with God, 'keeping my body completely under for that purpose.' Another discipline he imposed on himself was that of fasting, that in all things he might 'mortify the flesh,' not in order to obtain any morbid self-satisfaction, but solely for the purpose of preparing himself for the utmost service.

His preoccupation with death and frequent references to it would appear to indicate a somewhat morbid tendency; yet he could engage in such self-examination with the sole idea of viewing his actions in the light of eternity. Many expressed their astonishment at his ordination, and even more that he was ready to leave his beloved Cambridge to embark on the difficult work of a chaplain to the East India Company. He was burying his talents, men said, and wasting his gifts, when his scholarship and learning would be better used at home. He was forced to admit:

The flesh shrinks at times, but I do not regret having resigned the world. No, far from it. Life is but a short journey, and then if I be faithful unto death, my gracious reward will begin.

But he knew how to abound as well as how to be abased, and his natural vivacity was indeed always a cause of anxiety to him, for fear lest he should disgrace his high

calling. We can sympathize with his feelings when he wrote:

Heard Dr P. preach for two hours; his profusion of Greek and Latin quotations excited my mirth, when his unprofitableness ought to have raised very different emotions in me.

What views, then, had Henry Martyn of the necessity which he felt laid upon him to preach the gospel? His first conviction was of the sinfulness and helplessness of all men in the sight of a just and Holy God. This led him in one of his published sermons to analyse the causes of man's position in the following terms:

It was not the mere infirmity of nature that led men into such an extent of depravity, but radical enmity in the heart. The heart in its natural state is not merely an enemy to religion, but enmity itself against God, being made up of malice and ill will, and spiteful opposition to God for imposing the restraint of His laws upon us, and preparing a place of punishment. . . . Absolute ruin then would have been the consequence if justice had taken its course.

Yet our hearts are all too prone to acquiesce in the authority of this power without any resistance.

Men quarrel and fight about forms of government, but they never attempt to dispute the authority of sin. It is absolute despotism, and yet the most high spirited submit without a murmur.

The heart is continually deceiving itself as to its true condition, having

all the deceitfulness of a tradesman whose affairs are involved, and for the same reason. It knows that if its true state be once known, its credit and influence are gone.

But for those who have become convinced of their need of forgiveness, the way to obtain it has been opened; for Jesus Christ, after fulfilling all the prophecies made con-

cerning Him in the Old Testament, finished the work for which preparation had been made through the centuries

by the sacrifice of Himself on the cross, where He shed His blood for us and for many, for the remission of sins. . . . Thus the true way of pardon was opened, when neither God's mercy, nor our repentance, nor our good works could avail.

If God, with such care, such forethought, such preparation, has been providing an atonement for you, it cannot be that He should disappoint hopes humbly placed on that atonement; and we are authorized to say that if any man in the world will come for salvation from his sin in this way, he shall find it.

Thus he endeavoured to seize every opportunity of showing repentant sinners the door opened to them by the mercy of God. But what is meant by receiving Christ? To this he replies:

It is to receive him as God's unspeakable *gift*; provided by the love of the Father, before the foundation of the world, bestowed freely on us sinful men without regard to our deserts; it is to receive him as our atoning sacrifice and justifying righteousness—cordially accepting him as of God, made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption—coming to him as the foundation laid by God; believing in him as the appointed Saviour; and making him the ground of our hope of acceptance with God, to the exclusion of all other hopes. It is also to receive him as *Lord*, whose commands *alone* are to be obeyed . . . therefore to say we receive Christ Jesus the Lord, is to say that we receive him with the consciousness that we are sinners, perishing under the wrath of God; as a dying man receives the last medicine that restores his life, or as a drowning man seizes the kind hand that saves him. With like joy and love we receive God the Saviour, and gratitude consecrates to him the rest of life.

On another occasion, he made it clear that to be a Christian

is not to have been born in a Christian country and of Christian parents; to have received the sacramental ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; and to live a moral and honest

life; but it is to be in Christ . . . a state very different in nature and importance from the mere external possession of Christian privileges, or the performance of relative duties.

These messages of warning and hope to which he must point others, he continually applied to his own heart. In August, 1805, he wrote in his *Journal* these sentences which are only typical of many other expressions of thankfulness to God for the atoning work of Christ.

I bowed my knees in prayer, and never yet found such precious power in the atonement. The Spirit, of a truth, applied the blood of Jesus to cleanse me from all my sin. Whatever I had been in times past, free pardon might be obtained, and I might begin anew with quietness and peace, my heart being sprinkled from an evil conscience.

But Henry Martyn's spiritual life did not stop short at gratitude for the forgiveness of sins. We find in his writings increasing and deepening longings after God, numerous instances of delight and satisfaction in prayer, and many indications of his intense love of the Word of God. He felt he could not live one happy hour without having communion with God; even the most dreary wilderness would become paradise with His presence. At times, when he began to pray in much dejection, he could feel only a great darkness; but soon the Lord would pour into his heart light, joy and comfort. Nothing in the weak words used could bring such an astonishing change of heart; it could only be through God's fulfilling His promises made to those who seek Him. 'If there be anything I do, if there be anything I leave undone, let me be perfect in prayer,' was his cry. His love of the Bible was equally intense; he called it 'a precious and wonderful book,' and later his translation work led him increasingly to appreciate its wisdom. 'What I have learnt from the Word of God is satisfying,' he wrote, 'which nothing else in the whole world is.'

It is not surprising that to one of Martyn's eager temperament such spiritual riches could not remain only a personal possession, to be indulged and enjoyed in secret. These treasures must be shared with others. The pent up feelings must find an outlet, and the command to preach the gospel must be obeyed. Ordination appeared to him the first necessary step; but Cambridge and Lolworth was a vision too limited. We have seen how the expanding circle of action, of which he wrote in later years, made him lift his eyes beyond England to the farthest earthly shores. His dearest wish was to preach the gospel to the heathen. This desire had become such a burning ambition that he was prepared to sacrifice a brilliant career, home ties, and even the prospect of marriage in order to fulfil it. And when his offer to go as a missionary to India was rejected, largely for reasons beyond his control, he accepted the post of chaplain to the East India Company simply because it would afford him the desired opportunity of working in a land where the vast population had never heard the Redeemer's name.

Repeatedly in his writings we find both the motives and the impulsive power which urged and brought him to make this decision. He was burdened with a passionate desire to save perishing souls; he besought God that he might watch for souls as one who must give an account; he implored that 'I may hear God's trumpet sound, and warn souls lest they should perish, and their blood be required at my hand. Would to God I was stirred up to feel the affection of a minister.' To delight in the glory of the Church was useless if he did not exert himself in the salvation of individuals; nothing less than this was worth his labour or attention. He was downcast when Simeon criticized his sermons, saying that ordinary worshippers were not able to understand them; he declared that he would rather be a preacher of the gospel among the poor so as to be understood by them, than anything else on earth.

But most of all, it was the untouched multitudes who had never heard the gospel that appealed to him. On the long voyage to India he thought of the hundreds of millions lying in heathen darkness, and the few who were available to preach the truth of Christ;

And even of those few who are 'thrust out,' here is one who will not take the trouble to pray. Where then shall poor dying souls find an advocate. My soul cried out for a spirit of prayer and supplication in behalf of the church . . . I will be, through grace, the servant of Christ; and the little I can do for India I will, which is praying for it.

After arriving in India, however, he could do even more; to prayer was added preaching. Even in those early days, when he was still learning the language, and was consequently restricted to European, or at least English speaking congregations, he always kept in mind the need of the native peoples around him.

Lord, let this sermon be for the conversion of many souls; let me not preach always in vain, but let thy word at last go forth in power.

And a week later he added:

I lay in tears interceding for the unfortunate natives of this country.

He was always conscious that his life might be short; yet he could face the fact of death in the assurance that his hour would not come until his work was completed. Thus it was that he could pray:

Increase my zeal that though I am but a feeble and obscure instrument, I may struggle out my few days in great and unremitting exertions for the demolition of paganism, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom.

Almost his first words on arriving in the Hoogly river were for the Indian people:

To be prevented going among the heathen as a missionary

would break my heart . . . I feel pressed in spirit to do something for God . . . I have hitherto lived to little purpose, more like a clod than a servant of God; now let me burn out for God.

This realization of the spiritual need of the native peoples meant that, in spite of the pleasure derived from his fellowship with men like Daniel Corrie and David Brown, and the many delights of the family life at the latter's home at Aldeen, his stay in Calcutta was nevertheless not entirely happy. There was the occasion when he watched the passing of the juggernaut car, feeling an inexpressible horror at the heathen rites connected with it, yet unable to protest as (perhaps fortunately) he did not then know the language. In fact, it was this language barrier which led him to explore whether, with his linguistic gifts, he could translate the Scriptures into the vernacular Hindustani, and also by learning Sanskrit, on Marsham's advice, seek 'to carry the everlasting gospel through the regions of the east.'

It is not surprising that his ministry at Calcutta proved unacceptable to some of his fellow chaplains, and to many of the leading government and military officials. They were not accustomed to hearing the minister pleading with his congregation to turn in faith to Christ for forgiveness and eternal life! His appointment in September, 1806, to Dinapore, near Patna, was probably welcomed by all concerned. But again he found that his efforts to make contact with the native people were regarded with contempt, while the small group of soldiers who came to him for Bible study and prayer encountered considerable persecution. A new opportunity of service presented itself among the Portuguese and Indian women of the camp. Hitherto nothing had been done for them, but Martyn could not leave them uncared for, and offered to minister to them in their own language. It was of his work among these women that he wrote in his report to Calcutta, 'they are a people committed to me by God,

and as dear to Him as others; and next in order after the English, they come within the expanding circle of action.'

Perhaps it was the very lack of Christian fellowship at this station which brought him to examine more closely the whole 'problem of communication.' At least we find his spiritual insight and growth advancing to a remarkable degree. He was climbing to heights from which he could view the work and will of God for India with a wide and statesmanlike judgment, and even a confident assurance.

I lay not much stress upon clear arguments; the work of God is seldom wrought in this way. To preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is a better way to win souls.

And within a week we find this significant statement:

The Lord is not beholden to us for what we do, but in His good pleasure appoints us to this work, out of numberless other instruments no less worthy, and if we are cut off in the midst of our plans, His great scheme is not in the least degree disordered.

Opposition to his work among the native people on the ground that it was a waste of time deterred him not at all. 'The more men speak of the impossibility of converting a native, the more will God's power be displayed in bringing it to pass,' was his retort. His friends at Calcutta were not convinced of the wisdom of his remaining in the spiritual isolation of Dinapore, and more than once they wrote questioning his decision not to return to more congenial surroundings. His replies reveal both his inmost convictions and his supreme courage.

I never give up the idea of being an itinerant, and when I feel myself qualified, and the time come, I shall neglect the translation without scruple . . . If ever I am fixed at Calcutta, I have done with the natives . . . This is one reason for my apparently unconquerable aversion to being fixed there.

When I see a very small party of people who choose to sit

still, with their faces upon the right way and a flood of light poured upon it, and not far from these, millions equally valuable, groping for the true way in midnight darkness, I cannot help running with a lantern to the latter.

In the same letter, referring to the settlement of some differences of opinion regarding methods of Christian work in the Calcutta area, he rejoiced to hear that

the missionaries have learnt, what the best and wisest of men have sometimes need to learn, how to proceed in the work of God according to the will of God.

No estimate of the spiritual greatness of Henry Martyn can omit some reference to the most intimate problem of his love for Lydia Grenfell. To a temperament like his, such an experience might well be agonizing in its intensity. His own feelings were clear and unmistakable, but they were stretched almost to breaking point by a tension which lasted, as we have seen, for more than three years, a time spent in alternating hopes that Lydia would consent to come out to him, and fears that she might even cease writing to him. As we now know the main cause of this tension was her inability or unwillingness to make up her mind whether or not her affections, once given to another, could be devoted during the lifetime of her former lover to anyone else. Martyn's feelings are recorded in his *Journal*, and its intimate revelations must arouse a reverent wonder that a man so deeply in love could suffer such wounding, and still submit utterly to what he yet felt must be the overruling will of God. One might almost feel that this inner conflict would be too sacred for comment but for the triumphant way in which he was enabled to surmount his passionate feelings and desires.

My heart was sometimes ready to break with agony at being torn from its dearest idol, and at other times I was visited by a few moments of sublime and enraptured joy. Such is the conflict.

Lydia's final refusal to come out to him because her mother would not consent to it was received in October, 1807. He was then at Dinapore, and it is small wonder that he wrote from a heart 'bursting with grief and disappointment' at being deprived of the anticipated companion to banish his loneliness, for whom he had already begun to make his house more attractive. Yet so complete was his surrender that he wrote in connection with his translation work: 'I wish to have my whole soul swallowed up in the will of God.' Body, mind, and spirit, were all yielded to the supreme authority of the love of God, whose will he was learning to regard as not only good, but also acceptable, and even perfect.

One significant fact which seems to have received insufficient attention is Henry Martyn's progressive appreciation of the sacrament of Holy Communion, though it is noticeable that a sense of unworthiness at participating in this service was usually present in his mind. It has frequently been asserted that Evangelicals today do not value the sacraments, or sufficiently recognize their importance. This was certainly not the case with the early Evangelical clergy, of whom Martyn was a good example in this respect. In October, 1803, he stayed to receive the sacrament at Holy Trinity Church, Cambridge, after being convinced in a sermon of its importance. Though less hurried in spirit than usual, he yet admitted 'my faith was not in exercise.' On Easter Day, 1804, 'In the sacrament, I had to lament the want of a broken heart.' Three months later, 'at the receiving of the sacrament, my heart was hard and insensible. I knew not what to do. I seemed to have a heart of adamant, and full of pride and earthly thoughts.' On Christmas Day that year, he administered the chalice for the first time at St Edward's Church, Cambridge, and 'longed to be rightly affected with contrition and devotion, but all in vain.' But on 9th January, 1805, on reading the

charge to priests at the ordination service, he was 'affected even to tears at the importance of the ministry.' Not until 10th March of that year was he ordained to the priesthood himself, at the Chapel Royal, St James, and he records, 'In the sacrament which followed, I had a little more love and tenderness than before.' But his first mention of this service when in India is less assuring; on 1st June, 1806, at the New Church, Calcutta, he 'found little comfort in the ordinance.' A month later, however, after personal attacks had been made upon him, including one from the pulpit by a brother chaplain, he could say:

I rejoiced at having the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper . . . as the solemnities of that blessed ordinance sweetly tended to soothe the asperities, and dissipate the contempt which was rising; and I think I administered the cup to—and—with sincere good will.

Four weeks later, however, he felt 'hard-hearted at this feast of the Lord's dying love.' In March 1807 he 'administered the Lord's Supper with rather more solemnity of feeling than I have usually done,' while on Christmas Day of that year, the service 'was an affecting ordinance to me.' In April 1808 he records once more, 'This morning the society of soldiers met to renew their engagements to observe their rules. I then administered the sacrament.' And as a final example, he wrote in October 1809:

At ten, about sixteen of the regiment, with Mr and Mrs S. and Sabat, met in my bungalow, where, after a short discourse on 'Behold the Lamb of God,' we commemorated the death of the Lord. It was the happiest season I have yet had at the Lord's table, though my peace and pleasure were not unalloyed.

Slowly, but with increasing confidence, Martyn entered into a deeper realization of the blessings to be obtained from this service, in which throughout the centuries, all

Christian people have joined to show forth the Lord's death 'till He come.'

It is difficult for us to appreciate now what must have been the acute loneliness of the eighteen months he spent in Persia. There is an epic quality about his courage as he faced the fanatical opposition of Islam and increasing physical weakness with so few to whom he could turn for sympathy or interest. As the last year of his life opened he wrote:

To all appearance the present year will be more perilous than any I have seen, but if I live to complete the Persian New Testament, my life after that will be of less importance. But whether life or death be mine, may Christ be magnified in me. If He has work for me to do, I cannot die.

The moving story of the completion of the work and of the frustration which led to the fateful attempt to reach England has already been told. But his influence did not end with his death. He was not soon forgotten in Persia, and the *Missionary Register* for 1821 records a Captain Gordon as saying, 'You little think how generally the English Moollah, Martyn, is known throughout Persia, and with what affection his memory is cherished.'¹

Thus his work lived after him, and subsequent generations in many lands have recalled his faithful ministry with thankfulness. Yet remembrance by itself is not enough. 'He being dead yet speaketh.' This story of his life and extracts from his writings must bring an urgent challenge to action, to a similar surrender and dedication to the Master's service, with the prayer in our hearts that we too may be given grace to follow his example, and with him may be partakers of the heavenly kingdom.

¹ Quoted Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, i, p. 119.

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